

Jordan, Syria open trade talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Talks between delegations representing the Federation of the Syrian Chambers of Trade and Industry and the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce and the Amman Chamber of Industry began in Amman Sunday. The discussions dealt with means to expand trade exchange between the two countries as well as the prospects of establishing joint projects between the private sectors in both countries. President of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, Mohammed Asfour, highlighted the importance of such meetings noting that they "bolster the economic march between the two countries." He added that these meetings are commensurate with the directives of the Joint Syrian-Jordanian Higher Committee, and explained how these meetings could contribute to reaching the best methods for conducting joint projects. President of the Federation of the Syrian Chambers of Trade and Industry, Shaleh, hoped that these meetings would bolster and develop mutual cooperation in the industrial, agricultural, and tourism fields. President of the Amman Chamber of Industry, Khaldoun Abu Hammad, hoped that these meetings would lead to further meetings and help expand scope of cooperation between the two countries in the economic fields.

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PLO insists on key talks role

TUNIS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), in what officials say is its final word on the subject, has told the United States that no Palestinian delegation will negotiate with Israel unless it is named by the PLO. The memorandum was delivered to the U.S. ambassador in Tunis, Robert Pelletreau, Friday in the third U.S.-PLO meeting in a week. A copy was obtained by Reuters Sunday. "The Palestine Liberation Organization is willing to deal with (U.S. Secretary of State James) Baker's plan... only in accordance with a decision by its Central Council to conduct a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue," the memorandum said. "The PLO expresses its regret that the American response, from the beginning, ignores any role for the PLO in forming its delegation to the dialogue." It said the American administration should realize that "no Palestinian delegation will come to the negotiating table without being named and announced by the PLO." PLO officials said the memo was delivered by Tunisian representative Habis Rabbani and gave the final response to a number of proposals and clarifications received from Baker through the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

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Sharif Zeid resigns today; Badran tipped as successor

By F.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker is expected to submit its resignation Monday and Mudar Badran will be named as his successor heading a new Cabinet which will retain some of the present ministers, according to informed sources.

The sources said a tentative "initial list" had been drawn up of the new Cabinet and Badran, who served as prime minister for two terms in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was not expected to announce his government for "at least another couple of days."

According to information available to the Jordan Times from sources who insisted on anonymity, the following were considered as members of Badran's Cabinet:

Salem Masa'adeh to remain as deputy prime minister and interior minister and Marwan Al Qasbi as deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Ibrahim Izzeddine, serving minister of state for Prime Ministry affairs, as minister of culture and information;

Yusuf Hikmat to retain his tourism portfolio and Ibrahim Ayyoub to remain as minister of justice;

Abdullah Nsour, a former minister and serving member of the Lower House of Parliament representing Balqa Governorate, as minister of planning;

Thouqan Hindawi, a former minister and serving deputy representing Irbid Governorate, as minister of education;

Hanad Farhan, a member of the Upper House of Parliament, was tipped to be either minister of state for economic affairs or minister of finance; (there was also an indication that the Ministry of Industry and Trade could be amalgamated with the Ministry of Finance and Customs to form a single portfolio).

Ishaq Farhan, a former university president, to head the Ministry of Higher Education;

Ali Faghi, a Lower House member who was elected with Muslim Brotherhood help from Amman Governorate, as minister of Awqaf and Islamic affairs; Abdul Ra'ouf Rawabdeh, former minister and mayor of Amman and a deputy representing Irbid Governorate, as minister of municipal affairs and the environment;

Hussain Mnjalli, former head of the Jordan Ban Association and serving deputy representing Irbid Governorate, as minister of justice;

Fawaz Abu Ghannam, a former

senior official at the Prime Ministry, as minister of labour; Shafiq Zawaideh, a former minister of housing and public works who resigned to seek a seat in Parliament in the Nov. 8 general elections but lost the race, to return to his portfolio; and

Saddeddin Juma, secretary-general of the Prime Ministry, as minister of state for parliamentary affairs.

Among other names which could appear in the final list of Badran's government, according to the sources, are: Mohammad Addoub Al Zaben, a former minister and serving deputy, Amman Governorate, as minister of the Conservation of Nature, Kamel Sherif, a former minister of Awqaf and Islamic affairs, Mahmoud Sherif, a veteran journalist and former editor-in-chief of Al-Dustour, and Daoud Hamsaniyeh, a serving senator and former head of the National Medical Institution (NMI).

"This is an only initial list and nothing is final yet," insisted one of the sources. He said Sharif Zeid, a Field Marshal and former commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, was tipped to return to the Royal Court to replace Badran.

Some of the people whose names were mentioned told the

Jordan Times Sunday evening that they had not been contacted over their possible appointments to the Cabinet.

Sharif Zeid and his Cabinet is scheduled to be received by the King at the royal palace Monday where the Monarch will accept his resignation and designate Badran to succeed him, according to the sources. It was believed that Badran will launch consultations with nominees after he is formally assigned the job of heading the next government.

The expected appointment of Badran, 55, who enjoys a wide reputation in the Arab World as a "politician with persuasive powers," came as surprise to some observers who had expected Sharif Zeid to stay on and form a new Cabinet.

Sharif Zeid was appointed prime minister in April 1989 to succeed Zeid Rifa'i, who resigned following unrest against price rises in the country warranted by economic problems. In his letter of designation to the career military officer, the King said his government would act in caretaker capacity and see the country through the general elections to the Lower House of Parliament and put an end to economic crises as well as redress the Kingdom's economic course.

Sharif Zeid, who headed a



Mudar Badran

mostly technocrat cabinet, is credited with bringing about swift changes in the government and administration and initiating Jordan's recovery from dire financial straits through revamping the Central Bank hierarchy. He also supervised the Nov. 8 elections, widely hailed as the most free and honest elections in the Arab World.

During his two terms as prime minister—from 1976 to 1979 and from 1980 to 1984 — Badran, who is reputedly an expert in legal and constitutional matters, saw the booming of the Jordanian economy with the flow of expatriate remittances and Arab aid to Jordan and initiated many major industrial projects. He is also credited with taking decisive action against corruption in the civil services.

Parliament backs Jordan's pan-Arab policies, moves

By Mariam Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament Sunday presented their respective replies to the speech from the Throne made by His Majesty King Hussein at the opening of Parliament on Nov. 27.

While the Upper House (Senate) called for a gradual reduction of martial law provisions and suggested that it could start with elimination of military courts, the Lower House called for an abolition of martial law, in force in the country since the 1967 war.

Increased support for the Armed Forces was also emphasised by both Houses, which were received by the King in separate audiences at the Royal Court; in their replies read out by their respective speakers, Ahmad Al Lawzi and Suleiman Arar.

The Senate said it supported the "drafting of a national charter which would emanate from the Constitution as an element which would define (the concept of) belonging and development and set priorities and guide the way for implementation of policies." The proposed charter, which the King has said would be drawn up by a royal commission, should also "act as an umbrella for pluralism and political parties and organisations," the Senate said.

The Lower House said it "hopes to contribute to the drafting of the national charter" meaning that deputies should be members of the committee to be entrusted with preparing it.

A draft of the Senate reply was drawn up by senators Khalil Salem, Leila Sharsif, Akram Zuster and Juma Hammad and presented to the Senate Sunday morning. The senators, not to be outdone by the deputies, read and discussed every paragraph of the 13-page reply. In the four-hour discussion that followed, the Senate members left most of the draft unchanged.

The only major amendment was made in response to a suggestion made by former Prime Minister Ahmad Obaidat. A paragraph referring to the reasons behind the decline of the value of the Jordanian currency was added. It said that the diminished purchasing power of the dinar was not a coincidence, that it had come about as a result of over expenditure by the public sector because priorities had not visibly been set. The lack of priorities had put a major burden on the national budget, which had been, covered by external borrowing in hard currency and internal borrowing from the Central Bank of Jordan, it said. The amended paragraph also referred to the "extraneous expenditures" on goods and services at a time when the national revenues were dwindling as a result of the decline of the national currency.

In the reply presented at the Royal Court, the Senate supported the King's pan-Arab stands and called for Jordan's continued support of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. The Senate also supported Jordan's political decision to sever ties with the West Bank.

The Senate reply included a paragraph on population growth issues which it said needed to be handled in a constructive manner since Jordan's high population growth put an extra burden on the country's resources. Unemployment of educated in the

country was mentioned in the Senate's reply as a serious national issue which must be addressed as it poses an inherent danger to the developmental and psychological well being of the country.

The restructuring of manpower through the adaptation of education to social needs and job opportunities available in Jordan was also stressed in the Senate's reply.

The Senate praised the "true will" demonstrated by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to establish a just and durable peace, and said that the PLO initiatives "have exposed Israel and showed its intransigence and stubbornness just as the intifada has exposed the brutal and inhuman Israeli practices against the Palestinian people."

The Senate said that Jordan's continuing support for the Palestine question and the PLO initiatives had secured international support as for the idea of an international peace conference and worldwide recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to establish its own state on its national soil.

The Senate paid tribute to Iraq and said Baghdad's offer to change the current ceasefire with Iran into a just and permanent peace was "commendable and worthy praise."

The Senate called for more balanced spending, increased reliance on local production for basic needs and curbs on luxurious spending habits.

The Lower House also praised King Hussein's principled stands towards the Palestine question and noted that the severance of legal and administrative ties with the occupied West Bank does in no way mean that Jordan has forgotten the kinsmen or abandoned its deep-rooted responsibilities towards them.

Bush, Gorbachev see better era

MARSAXLOKK BAY, Malta (Agencies) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President George Bush ended their storm-tossed summit Sunday and said they made progress towards a better East-West relationship.

Neither man pointed to a specific agreement on a key range of arms control or other issues, and in an unprecedented joint news conference, made it clear they have disagreements over weapons shipments to leftist rebels in El Salvador and on the issue of naval arms reductions.

The two men seemed at ease as they fielded questions about the Soviet luxury liner Maxim Gorky, then shook hands and left the news conference together.

"It accomplished everything I

hoped it would," Bush said of the two-day summit off the Mediterranean island of Malta.

"We stated, both of us, that the world leaves the one epoch of cold war and enters another epoch," Gorbachev said. "This is just the beginning. We are just at the very beginning of our long road to a long-lasting peaceful period."

Gorbachev said he was "encouraged and inspired" by the changes in Eastern Europe, where hardline communist leaders have been swept away in recent weeks.

Asked whether Moscow and Washington should mount a combined drive for peace in the Middle East, Bush replied: "It doesn't require a joint initiative to solve the Middle East ques-

tion."

But he praised Soviet policy in the region, adding: "There is a constructive role that the Soviets are implementing... I don't think we are very far apart on this."

He added: "We have found that the Soviet Union is playing a constructive role in Lebanon. So there's common ground there."

Gorbachev said that change in Eastern Europe was "a problem whose time has come" and must be solved with new approaches by the people of each country.

But Gorbachev told the news conference that "history has willed" there are two Germans.

Bush agreed with the Soviet leader that citizens of each country must determine how to proceed with change, and he said the United States doesn't want to do

anything "unrealistic" that "causes any country to end up going backwards, or end up having its own people in military conflict, one with the other."

That's why he was acting cautiously and did not "go demonstrating on top of the Berlin Wall to show how happy we are about the change," Bush said.

The Soviet leader said there was no specific timetable for a new arms agreement to cut long-range nuclear forces by 50 per cent, but he hoped one could be agreed on before a summit set for next June in the United States.

The two leaders directed U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to meet in January for further work on major issues of a strategic weapons

treaty.

Asked about Central America, where the United States has complained about continued flow of Soviet arms to El Salvador rebels, Bush said there were differences between the leaders.

Gorbachev said the Soviets had been told by Nicaragua, an ally of the United States accuses of funneling the weapons to the Salvadoran rebels, that such shipments had stopped. Bush said it appeared Nicaragua was lying to the Soviets.

Bush flew to Brussels after the summit to discuss the talks with NATO leaders. Gorbachev left for Moscow to hold a similar meeting with Warsaw Pact leaders — many of them newly installed as a result of Eastern European changes.

East German politburo quits; Honecker expelled from party

EAST BERLIN (Agencies) — East Germany's ruling Communist Party politburo resigned Sunday along with the central committee, East German radio reported.

The resignation of party chief Egon Krenz's 10-man politburo was announced on the radio by Gunter Schabowski, a reform-minded member of the ruling body. Krenz has been in power for less than two months and retained his job as party general secretary for the time being.

Schabowski said the party had expelled former leader Erich Honecker, ex-state Security Minister Erich Mielke and several other members of the old guard because of years of misrule.

The central committee, which

has 160 members, and the 13-member politburo quit. A working group has been set up to run party affairs until an emergency congress in two weeks.

"To avoid further danger to the existence of the party, the politburo has found it necessary to declare its resignation," said Schabowski, briefing East German reporters during break in proceedings at party headquarters.

He said the central committee was also stepping down to pave the way for a commission to examine the reasons for the deep crisis in the party and society.

The resignations, coupled with the expulsion of the once-omnipotent Honecker and 11 other top Communist officials, was the most sensational turn yet

in the party's sagging fortunes.

Earlier, the ADN news agency reported the arrests of three former politburo members and the escape from the country of another senior official.

Guenther Mittag and Harry Tisch were taken into investigative custody suspected of "heavily damaging socialist property and the people's economy through abuse of power," ADN said.

Mittag had been the country's economy chief under Honecker, while Tisch had been the chief of the Communist-run trade unions federation.

ADN said Gerhard Mueller, former party leader in the city of Erfurt and former candidate, or Nonvoting, member of the politburo, had also been arrested under similar suspicions.

Czech party names new cabinet but fails to satisfy reformers

PRAGUE (Agencies) — A new Communist-dominated coalition government was named Sunday, with five non-Communist members but a majority of holdovers from the old government.

Civic Forum, the nation's pro-democracy reform movement, immediately criticised the new cabinet and called for a mass rally Monday at Wenceslas Square, the site of two weeks of pro-democracy protests that ended the Communist Party's 41-year monopoly on power.

Communist Premier Ladislav Adamec, who opened negotiations with the opposition 12 days ago, retained his post, according to the state-run news agency CTK.

Of the five non-Communist

named to the 21-person government, three had no official party affiliation. One was a Socialist Party member and one from the People's Party. Thirteen members of the new cabinet had served in the previous cabinet. The three other new members were Communists.

Among the new Communist appointments was Miroslav Vacek, who took over the post of defence minister. Vacek, an army general, was named despite an opposition demand that the ministry be headed by a civilian.

Vacek had served as deputy minister under former Defence Minister Milan Vlachek.

But in a move obviously calculated to appease demands for

more religious freedom, Josef Hromadka, a high-ranking leader of Czechoslovakia's Protestant Church, was named one of the seven deputy premiers.

Moments after the appointments were announced, opposition leaders criticised the makeup of the new government, in light of the large number of holdovers.

One Civic Forum leader called the new government an "outrage," and said the Monday rally was to get Czechoslovakians back on the street.

Jiri Dienstbar, the forum's official spokesman, said: "Our relationship to the new government is evidenced by the fact that we are calling a mass rally on Wenceslas Square."

Syrians tighten cordon around Aoun

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Syria boosted its forces facing Lebanon's Christian enclave Sunday and mediation to avert a bloody final assault was reported to have bogged down.

Security sources quoted by Reuters said Syrian troops unloaded trucks of ammunition and dug new trenches just 20 metres from the enclave where General Michel Aoun is holding out in defiance of President Elias Hrawi.

They said the Syrians, backed with tanks, had deployed more artillery batteries and mortars in the city's southern suburbs and now faced the enclave on five fronts with their Lebanese allies.

Political sources said mediation efforts by France, the Vatican and Christian churches between Aoun and Hrawi, elected last week with Syrian backing, had made no headway.

Tens of thousands of Aoun's supporters massed for the sixth straight day around Aoun's palace in east Beirut to form a human shield against any offensive (See page 2).

Prime Minister Salim Al Hoss said Aoun was leading Lebanon to "national suicide," but ruled out a military attack to oust him from the hilltop presidential palace where he is holed up.

"Gen. Aoun has become an outlaw, leading a minority that will resist only in partitioning Lebanon," Hoss told the AP in a statement.

The premier declared that if Aoun refuses to accept an Arab League-brokered peace accord to end 14 years of civil war, it "will mean national suicide."

Hoss' statement indicated that the prospect of a military showdown between Aoun and the Syrians was receding.

But political sources told Reuters a Syrian assault to topple Aoun was inevitable because there was little room for compromise between Aoun and Damascus.

"The decision to attack has been taken at least by Syria. All this delay is to give diplomacy a chance to solve the issue without bloodshed, but if mediation efforts fail, the military option is there," one Christian politician said.

"There is 180 degrees of difference in their positions. If Aoun surrenders he would be finished and if the Syrians back off they would lose," the politician said.

The foreign ministers of a tripartite Arab League committee which drafted a peace accord for Lebanon earlier this year were due to meet in Saudi Arabia Sunday to discuss the crisis.

U.S. President George Bush said Sunday the United States and the Soviet Union were in full agreement on the need to end bloodshed in Lebanon.

"We do not want to see any more killing in Lebanon, we are in total agreement on that," Bush told a joint news conference with President Mikhail Gorbachev at the end of their Malta summit.

"Our aspirations are shared by Mr. Gorbachev," Bush said, confirming that Lebanon had been one of the issues discussed during their summit.

Massive Israeli sweep in Nablus 10-year-old killed, 27 wounded in Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Soldiers fatally shot a 10-year-old Palestinian girl in the head and wounded at least 27 other Palestinians during widespread stone-throwing protests triggered by an Israeli arrest sweep in the occupied territories, reports said.

Sabah Ahmad Baalusha was shot in the head during clashes between soldiers and stone-throwing protesters in Shati refugee camp and died instantly. Her brother said soldiers fired at random into the alley where the family lives.

Arabs angered by Friday's killing of four Palestinians staged a full commercial strike and demonstrated on the streets throughout the Gaza Strip, witnesses quoted by Reuters said.

Two other Palestinians died in accidental explosions in the West Bank, including a 12-year-old boy who picked up an unidentified object that blew up in a village near Bethlehem, the army said.

The upsurge in violence came as uprising leaders called for a "higher stage of struggle" against

Israel in a leaflet published to mark the second anniversary this week of the Palestinian rebellion.

Since the start of the revolt on Dec. 9, 1987, 624 Arabs have been killed by Israelis, including Sunday's victim. Another 154 Palestinians have been slain by unknown assailants as suspected collaborators with Israel, and 42 Israelis have been killed.

In the West Bank, hundreds of soldiers carried out a massive search for uprising activists for a third day in Nablus, after detaining at least 30 suspects and killing four others Friday and Saturday.

Israeli media reported there were dozens of arrests and said the sweep was the army's largest in Nablus since 1967.

The daily Maariv said about 2,000 soldiers were searching the city, which has a population of more than 100,000 and has been a major centre of the uprising.

In occupied Jerusalem, Jewish settlers' leader Rabbi Moshe Levinger went on trial accused of killing an Arab merchant when he fired at stone-throwers in Hebron market in the West Bank in

September 1988.

Settlers demonstrated outside the courthouse against justice Minister Dan Meridor, saying that a settler was standing trial while uprising activists went unprosecuted.

At Ketzioz detention camp in southern Israel, Palestinian prisoners staged a hunger strike to press demands for improved conditions.

Sunday's other gunshot injuries were reported in the Burjaj refugee camps and the Zeitoun, Sheikh Radwan and Rimal areas in and around Gaza City.

The latest leaflet, the 49th of the uprising, urged Palestinians to step up the rebellion, noting it had so far achieved an American dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and forced Israel to come up with a Middle East peace plan.

"The intifada enters its third year with more boldness, more resolution and more experience to create a higher stage of struggle by the masses," the leaflet said.

Rebels hold out in Manila area against army assault

MANILA (AP) — Government forces battled rebellious soldiers among skyscrapers in the financial district Sunday after repulsing the mutineers' assault on military headquarters. More than 600 rebels surrendered.

President Corason Aquino, facing the gravest challenge yet to his nearly four-year administration, ruled out a ceasefire and vowed: "What they started, we will finish."

But he turned down suggestions by cabinet members that he declare a "state of siege," said assistant press secretary Lourdes Syntago. That would be tantamount to martial law.

"The attempted coup by rebel soldiers has been crushed," Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos told reporters in battle-scarred Camp Aguinaldo.

Military chief of staff Renato de Villa said pro-government forces had contained the mutineers to an 11-building area in the financial district of Makati, where numerous foreign embassies are located and where many

foreign diplomats and businessmen live.

However, junior and middle-grade officers in several provincial commands declared their support Sunday for the rebellion, which began Friday. Rebels also maintained control of Macatan air base in Cebu, 560 kilometres south of Manila.

At least 56 people have been killed and more than 500 wounded since Friday, according to hospital and Red Cross figures. That included Brigadier-General Alexander Aguirre, the officer tasked with securing the financial district. He was wounded Sunday in the leg.

In addition, more than 10,000 people fled their homes to escape the fighting and were housed in schools, churches and other refugee centres. Many shops were closed. Garbage piled high in the streets because workers were prevented from collecting it.

Schools were closed indefinitely but government employees were ordered to report for work

Monday. Officials planned to reopen the international airport at noon (0400 GMT) Monday.

Before dawn Sunday, the rebels pounded Camp Aguinaldo, about eight kilometres east of Manila's office, with howitzers and heavy machine gun fire.

Rebels blasted through the gates of the sprawling camp with an armoured vehicle, which was struck by ground fire. After a fierce four-hour battle, some- times hand-to-hand, the rebels sought a ceasefire. Their commander, Major Cesar Dela Pena, surrendered with about 200 men a few hours later.

Later Sunday, Brig.-Gen. Marcelo Blando, commander of Fort Magaysay, surrendered in the city's Greenhills district with about 400 army soldiers and elite Scout Rangers, military officials said.

Hundreds of other rebels, however, held out in Makati, where they seized 11 buildings Saturday, including the Intercontinental Hotel.

Iraq to disband 5 divisions

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq is to disband five army divisions, demobilising more than 20,000 men, Baghdad newspapers said Sunday.

The papers said the decision was made at a meeting of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council and Baath Party leaders, chaired by President Saddam Hussein.

Baghdad has a standing army of about a million men. More than 250,000 soldiers have been discharged since fighting in the eight-year-long Gulf war against Iran was halted by a U.N.-brokered ceasefire in August, 1988.

There has, however, been no progress in peace talks between Iraq and Iran since the ceasefire and two huge armies still face each other across their rugged frontier, from snow-capped mountains in the north of marshy swamps in the south.

Hussein said Saturday that full peace in the Gulf was close and held out the possibility of a summit with Iran.

Basic differences remain between the two sides on how to restart the stalled talks — Iran wants Iraq to withdraw its troops from 2,600-square-kilometre of Iranian territory.

Tehran says the withdrawal could coincide with a swap of more than 100,000 prisoners of war (PoWs) held by both sides, an estimated 60,000 in Iraq.

Iraq, accusing Iran of blackmail, has rejected the offer saying priority must be given to clearing the disputed Shatt Al Arab waterway of war debris before other issues can be tackled.

"I used to tell you that victory was at hand," the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) quoted Hussein as telling relatives of the dead from the eight-year Gulf war.

"Now I see peace is coming and with God's help I can say I feel it with my hands."

Hussein said once some progress had been made towards peace, "a meeting could be held at the level of the two countries' leadership... whether in Baghdad or Tehran or any other place to be agreed."

Such a summit could "solve all the issues and enable the two countries to live in peace and stabilise the region," INA quoted the Iraqi president as saying.

He said he based his optimism that peace was at hand on a "wide and deep analysis of the situation in the world and in the region as well as on Iraq's growing ability to (achieve) peace."

But Hussein added that Iran had failed to take seriously an Iraqi proposal that the two sides form specialised committees to implement Resolution 598, drafted by the U.N. Security Council as the basis for peace.

He regretted that both sides were still holding thousands of prisoners of war.

"The reason is that the Iranian authorities want to use the PoWs as a card for compromise, contrary to international agree-



ments," Hussein said. "How does it benefit the Iraqis for the PoWs to remain captive? If they ask themselves this question, they will surely come to the conclusion that they have to release all Iraqi PoWs they hold for release of all Iranian PoWs we hold."

Only a few hundred elderly or sick PoWs have been exchanged since the ceasefire.

Iran has said all PoWs could be released if Iraqi troops withdraw from the Iranian territory which it says they still occupy. Baghdad called the offer blackmail.

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, trying to get Iran and Iraq to resume negotiations, said last Tuesday that Iran had accepted an invitation to a new round of indirect talks but Iraq had not responded.

Saudis become targets in terror war

By Nahla Megall
Associated Press

MANAMA (AP) — A war of terror against Saudi Arabia by pro-Iranian Shi'ite Muslim extremists is keeping Arab nerves on edge in the Gulf.

Like many of the Middle East's murderous feuds, this one is tangled in the region's conflicts and has its roots in centuries of deep religious rivalry.

Arab officials speculate the attacks are the work of Iranian radicals, aimed at undermining moves by so-called moderates in Tehran who want to end a rift with Saudi Arabia. More recent attacks also may be linked to Saudi-led efforts to end Lebanon's 14-year-old civil war.

The attacks date to an August 1987 attempt to blow up a Saudi liquefied gas plant. Since then, six Saudi Arabian diplomats from Brussels to Bangkok have been assassinated, and others injured. Attempts to blow up key Saudi oil installations have continued.

The semi-official Saudi daily Ozak strongly implied Iran was behind the attempted assassination in Turkey of a Saudi diplo-

mat, who lost his legs in a booby-trap bombing.

"The accusing fingers are all directed toward one party, which has persisted in exporting terrorism, perpetrating crime, telling lies and spreading false rumours," the newspaper said.

Last September, Shi'ite agents were executed in Saudi Arabia for planting bombs in July in the city of Mecca, birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim faith's holiest shrine. One man was killed and 16 wounded by the bombs.

All told, the Saudis have executed at least 20 Shi'ites, some of them Kuwaitis, since September 1988 for terrorist activities. There has been no direct connection established between the discovery of a bomb aboard a Saudi jetliner in Karachi, Pakistan, on Nov. 25 and the Shi'ite terror campaign. But it heightened Saudi alarm.

Iran and Saudi Arabia are two titans of the Muslim World long divided by a religious rift that has bedeviled Islam for the last 12 centuries.

Revolutionary Iran's 55 million people overwhelmingly adhere to

the Shi'ite sect, which broke away from Islam's Sunni mainstream in the seventh century.

Most of Saudi Arabia's 12 million population are Sunnis, like 80 per cent of the world's 1 billion Muslims. But there is a Shi'ite minority in the oil-rich eastern province.

Iranian radicals consider the Saudis U.S. allies. They demand that the Saudi royal family be stripped of custody of Islam's holiest sites, one of the main pillars of the Saudi dynasty's legitimacy.

Last July, Iran's then chief justice, Ayatollah Abdul Karim Ardebili, declared: "We want God to give us the strength... to throw out the corpse of this infidel (idolatrous) despot from the House of God."

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's 1979 revolution and its avowed aim of exporting radical Islam to the Gulf Arab states sharpened the rivalry.

The Saudis, like many Arab countries, supported Iraq in the eight-year Gulf war with Iran, triggering Iranian attacks on Saudi tankers in the Gulf and widespread destabilisation efforts by Tehran among Saudi Arabia's allies along the strategic waterway.

Khomeini's death on June 3 and the election in July of Hashemi Rafsanjani, leader of Tehran's so-called pragmatists, as president raised hopes that tension would ease. But Iranian hardliners oppose Rafsanjani's liberalising policies because they believe they run counter to Khomeini's radical teachings.

The official Saudi Press Agency said after a Saudi official was shot to death in Beirut on Nov. 1 that the kingdom "knows well who is benefiting from these acts, and who is masterminding and implementing them."

Without specifically naming Iran, it linked the slaying to Iranian opposition to a Saudi-led Arab League peace accord to end Lebanon's 14-year-old civil war. The accord was endorsed by Lebanon's parliament, meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia, on Oct. 24.

Backed by Tehran, Lebanon's 1.2 million Shi'ites, the largest

sect in Lebanon, charge that the agreement does not give them enough political power and have vowed to oppose it.

The SPA commentary stressed that opposition to the Taif accord included "non-Arab regimes" and had helped "fan the flames of sedition" in Lebanon.

The reference to non-Arabs was the closest the Saudis have come to officially pointing the finger at Iran for masterminding the assassinations and bombings.

State-guided newspapers in the region have not been so hesitant. The Iranian link has been hardened by claims of responsibility for some of the attacks by three pro-Iranian Shi'ite groups: Islamic Jihad of the Hejaz ("Islamic holy war against Saudi Arabia"), the Soldiers of Justice and Lebanon's Islamic Jihad, which holds two American hostages.

Some of the Shi'ites executed in Saudi Arabia for the Mecca bombings publicly confessed before their execution that they had been recruited in Kuwait by the Iranian embassy there.

Tehran denied any involvement in the bombings. But there is speculation that the violence was masterminded by Iranian radicals opposed to Rafsanjani's efforts to boost Iran's relations with the West and its Gulf Arab neighbours following last year's ceasefire with Iraq.

Saudi Arabia broke off diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1988, citing terrorism and subversion. The Saudis were particularly angered by attempts by Iranians to whip up anti-American and anti-Saudi passions among the 2 million Muslims who make the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

More than 400 pilgrims, most of them Iranians, were killed in riots in the holy city in 1987. The Saudis said the Iranians instigated the violence. Tehran accused the Saudis of deliberately massacring the Iranians and threatened revenge.

The attacks on the Saudis began after four Shi'ites were executed in September 1988 for planting explosives at a petrochemical plant in the oil centre of Dammam during the Gulf War.

Tent village protesters set to stay to protect Aoun

BEIRUT (R) — Amid shattered plans around the presidential palace, a makeshift tent village is taking on an air of permanence as thousands of demonstrators form a living shield for the man they see as symbol of Lebanon's freedom.

The mainly Christian men, women and children have flocked to the palace for six days running or slept in the grounds to protect defiant General Michel Aoun from military attack.

So far they have succeeded, as President Elias Hrawi — recognised internationally but fiercely rejected by Aoun and his supporters — admitted Friday.

"If there had not been innocent people around the former Lebanese army commander, we would have suppressed (the mutiny) and finished the story," the Syrian-backed president said.

Hrawi says he is delaying any attack on Bab al-Dar Palace to give time for international mediation but is determined to force Aoun out. Protesters seem equally determined to stay.

"We will stay for ever if

necessary," said merchant seaman Roger Daccache. "I have been all over the world and this is the best country. We have to try to save it — We will save it."

Between the tents, stones mark out living space or serve as hearths for camp fires. An effigy of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad hangs from a tree, reinforcing the defiant message on scores of posters and shouted from a makeshift stage.

Syrian troops and their allies ring the enclave, unable to move against the general without possible massive casualties among his supporters. Aoun opposes the Arab League plan under which Hrawi was elected because it fails to provide a clear timetable for a Syrian withdrawal. His Muslim opponents accuse him of presidential ambitions.

The demonstrators backing Aoun largely ignore the threat of attack, maintaining an atmosphere of carnival. But a tremor of fear occasionally shows. Anti-aircraft fire from the palace as warplanes flew over twice in the past week

briefly panicked some protesters. But most say they will stay to face any attack.

"They don't seem to care," said an official of the Bureau Central de Coordination Nationale (BCCN), which helps organise protests and calls general strikes in the Falangist enclave.

"They say they have been through seven months in hell during the shelling. Now the difference is that they are making a choice to defend the palace."

More than 850 people were killed between last March, when Aoun launched what he called a "war of liberation" against Syrian forces, and last Sept. 23 when a ceasefire took effect.

"Tragically spring 1988, Beirut winter?" reads one placard, reflecting the tension in the enclave following a big Syrian troop buildup and Hrawi's threat to topple Aoun by force.

The bureau represents about 45 groups — students, mothers, professional people, and political organisations — and insists it does not take orders or money from Aoun's

cabinet.

"This is a revolution," said the official, a woman factory manager, who declined to be named. "We reject everything that has happened in the last 46 years (since independence). Do you expect us to lead a revolution while being manipulated?"

BCCN officials say the "human shield" tactic was suggested by individuals not the leadership and some were surprised by the tens of thousands who took part.

The bureau provides stewards at palace sit-ins, along with food, drink, tents, flags and blankets. About 30 women volunteers at a time, working in shifts, labour 24 hours a day making pita bread sandwiches for protesters.

Officials say they rely on donations or use their own money. They say the palace sit-in will continue day and night for a year if necessary, though with fewer people. "We want the world to know we are free and not manipulated by anyone," said the woman official. "This country is ours and we want to decide its future — no one else."

Iraq, France discuss aerospace cooperation

BAGHDAD (AP) — A French delegation Sunday held talks with senior Iraqi officials on aerospace and communications cooperation in what diplomats said was linked to Iraq's drive to build up its own arms industry.

Officials reported that the delegation headed by Jacques Mitterrand, brother of France's president, met with senior government officials.

The Iraqi team included Deputy Prime Minister Sadoun Hamad, Oil Minister Issam Abdul Rahim Al Chalabi and Transport and Communications Minister Mohammad Hamza Al Zabadi.

The delegation, which arrived in Baghdad several days ago, comprises representatives of several French companies, including France's aerospace giant Avions Marcel-Dassault-Breguet which manufactures the Mirage combat jets used by Iraq.

Officials said they have also held a long session with Gen. Hussein Kamel, Iraq's minister of industry and military industrialisation who has overall charge of developing the country's rapidly expanding arms industry.

The officials said the French delegation discussed ways of de-

veloping economic and technical links, but declined to give any other details.

Western diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Mitterrand was discussing the possibility of Dassault setting up an aircraft manufacturing plant in Iraq, probably to produce the advanced Mirage 2000 fighter which Iraq wants to buy to upgrade its powerful air force.

Iraq has expressed similar interest in building an aircraft industry with Soviet help to manufacture the advanced MiG-29 fighter, which has the NATO codename Fulcrum.

The Soviets have not commented on the proposed deal and Iraqi officials were reluctant to say if negotiations with Moscow have produced any result.

Western diplomats said a Soviet economic delegation that visited Baghdad last month to draw up a long-term economic cooperation agreement likely discussed the deal with Iraqi officials.

The diplomats said an announcement could be made next month when a high-level Iraqi economic and technical delegation is scheduled to visit Moscow.

Herzog starts state visit to Argentina Wednesday

TEL AVIV (R) — Relations between Israel and Argentina, emerging from an atmosphere of Jewish suspicion, are ending the year on a high note with the first state visit by an Israeli president to Buenos Aires.

Chaim Herzog's largely ceremonial visit starting Wednesday will serve to cement relations with a country containing the fourth largest Jewish community outside Israel.

It should also show that the election of President Carlos Menem, the son of Syrian parents, has not affected Argentina's traditional neutrality towards the Arab-Israeli dispute.

The swings in attitude during the year were demonstrated by the flow of Jewish emigrants from Argentina to Israel, which initially rose but then fell as unease over Menem faded.

"Our expectation was that by the end of the year there would be 2,500 to 3,000 immigrants from Argentina," said Gad Ben-Ari, spokesman for the Jewish Agency, the organisation which oversees immigration to the Jewish state.

"But in the last few months there has been a decline in the numbers," said Ben-Ari, whose agency now predicts a 1989 total of around 2,000, above the 1988 figure but inflated by the early surge.

Menem's Syrian ancestry sparked fears among many of Argentina's estimated 300,000 Jews that his rise to the presidency would open the way for anti-Semitism.

Some Jews, descendants of the same wave of East European immigration which also flooded into North America at the turn of the century, looked to Israel for

safety. "At the beginning there was a fear among Jews in Argentina that the election of President Menem... would have a negative influence," Ben-Ari said.

"It was just fear. After a few months he made calming statements and apparently many of them came to realise that Menem is not that bad."

Continuing emigration from Argentina, which has more Jews than any country except the United States, Israel, the Soviet Union and France, is attributed now mainly to its economic difficulties.

The same Syrian ancestry which caused initial disquiet among Jews has prompted Menem to offer to help the search for Middle East peace.

"President Menem is interested in what is going on in the Middle East," said Giora Podes, spokesman for Herzog. "I am sure that our president will talk about the situation."

Argentina has endorsed the view that Palestinians should have a state, but the Israeli Foreign Ministry said Buenos Aires rejected a request by the Palestine Liberation Organisation to open an office.

"The fact that President Menem is from an Arab origin created an atmosphere of suspicion," said a Foreign Ministry source. "Those fears do not exist any longer."

Israeli military sources say Argentina is developing a missile with Iraq and Egypt with a range of 1,000 kilometres, sufficient to strike Israel from Iraq. But the reports have had no apparent impact on Israeli-Argentine relations.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Blast kills 2 SLA militiamen

MARIAYOUN, Lebanon (R) — A mine killed two pro-Israeli South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen in South Lebanon Sunday, a day after a militiaman was killed in a similar incident, security sources said. They said the mine exploded at Beit Yahoun, one of five crossing points between the Jewish state's self-proclaimed "security zone" and the rest of Lebanon. The SLA immediately closed the crossing and searched the area. There were no claims of responsibility for the attack. On Saturday a roadside bomb killed an SLA member near Nabi Taher village inside the zone. The SLA retaliated by shelling the Shi'ite Muslim market town of Nabatiyah outside the zone, killing a man and a baby boy and wounding 15 people. The 3,000-strong SLA and about 1,000 Israeli troops patrol the zone to stop guerrillas infiltrating Israel's northern border.

Americans to study Syrian MIG

TEL AVIV (R) — U.S. Air Force and intelligence technicians are studying a MiG-23 flown to Israel two months ago by a Syrian defector, the Israeli newspaper Hadashot said Sunday. The defector refused to confirm or deny the report but military sources said the fighter would be of special interest to Washington because unlike any MiG-23 previously seen by the Americans it was designed for air-to-air combat. Hadashot said Israeli pilots had flown the plane several times and American intelligence agents were now taking it apart and photographing the pieces. The United States is Israel's closest ally. An army spokesman declined comment on the whereabouts of the 33-year-old Syrian Air Force major who flew the plane to Israel on Oct. 11 saying he hoped to change his life in "a free, democratic state." Military experts said the MiG-23 had benefited from improvements made by the Syrians since Israel's Lebanon invasion in 1982 when the Jewish state said it wiped out 80 aircraft, a fifth of the Syrian Air Force.

'Moscow supports Syrian policy'

DAMASCUS (R) — A Soviet official was quoted Sunday as saying Moscow supported Syria's "important and constructive" policy in Lebanon. Absamant Masaleev, a member of the Communist Party's Central Committee and the Supreme Soviet, was speaking during a meeting with President Hafez Al Assad Saturday night, Syrian newspapers reported. "The Soviet delegation expressed appreciation over the firm and principled policy adopted by Syria on the international level and its effective and constructive role in the region," the press reports said. "The delegation also expressed appreciation over the important and constructive role played by Syria in Lebanon which contributed in ensuring the success of the national reconciliation process."

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:30	Korona
15:45	Programme review
15:55	Children programmes
16:00	News summary in Arabic
16:05	World News
16:15	Local programme
16:40	Programme review
16:50	News in Arabic
16:55	Arabic series
17:10	Programme review
17:15	Local programmes
17:30	News summary in Arabic
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:20	Des Chiffres et de lettres
18:30	L'Appart
18:40	News in French
19:00	Weekly Sport magazine
19:30	News in Hebrew
19:45	Arabic series
20:30	Golden Girls
21:10	The Richest Men in the World
22:00	News in Arabic
22:30	The final days "Richard Nixon"
PRAYER TIMES	
04:53	Fajr
06:15	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:26	Dhuhr
14:13	'Asr
16:26	Maghrib
17:58	Isha

CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Switich Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrestrial Church Tel. 622666	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543	
Argentinean Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
It will be cold and partly cloudy with possible scattered showers of rain. Winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with northerly moderate wind	

GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	690100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport	08-53200

AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/52
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	64428106
ASB	64344112
Jabali Amman Maternity	642352
Malhas, J. Amman	635140
Palestine, Shamsian	6641714
Shamsian Hospital	669131
University Hospital	843454
Al-Masdar Hospital	6672291
The Islamic, Abadi	66612757
Al-Abil, Abadi	6641646
Italian, Al-Mudajen	7710113
Al-Badiri, J. Ashraf	77511216
Army, Marra	89611615
Al-Qadiri Hospital	60224050
BRDs	674151

ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986372
BRDs	
Princess Batna Hospital	(02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275
Ibn Al Nefes Hospital	(02)247100
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(08)314111

08:05	Baghdad (RJ)
09:00	Damascus (RJ)
09:00	Sanaa (RJ)
09:00	Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Cairo (RJ)
09:45	Bahrain, Kuwait (RJ)
10:05	Lamaca (RJ)
11:15	Agaba (RJ)
11:45	Cairo, Agaba (RJ)
12:05	Vietnam (RJ)
17:10	Cambodia, Tunis (RJ)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport, Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:05	Baghdad (RJ)
09:00	Damascus (RJ)
09:00	Sanaa (RJ)
09:00	Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Cairo (RJ)
09:45	Bahrain, Kuwait (RJ)
10:05	Lamaca (RJ)
11:15	Agaba (RJ)
11:45	Cairo, Agaba (RJ)
12:05	Vietnam (RJ)
17:10	Cambodia, Tunis (RJ)

18:30	Baghdad (RJ)
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Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:10	Sanaa (RJ)
10:05	Baghdad (LA)
10:05	Cairo (MS)
13:00	Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
13:00	Kuwait (GF)
14:10	Buqaat (RO)
14:45	Kuwait (GF)
18:40	Paris (AF)
09:35	Baghdad (AF)

15:00	Kuwait (KU)
15:15	Buchanan (RO)
16:00	Thripoli (AF)
19:40	Baghdad (AF)
01:35	Paris (AF)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

11:15	Vienna, Montreal, New York (RJ)
12:15	Frankfurt, Copenhagen (RJ)
12:45	Cairo (RJ)
13:45	Agaba, Cairo (RJ)
19:30	Damascus (RJ)
19:40	Kuwait, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
19:45	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:16	Jeddah (RJ)
20:20	Cairo (RJ)
28:45	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:15	London (BA)
06:15	Beirut (ME)
10:10	Frankfurt (LF)
10:45	Cairo (MS)
13:45	Baghdad (LA)
13:45	Abu Dhabi (GF)

15:00	Kuwait (KU)
15:15	Buchanan (RO)
16:00	Thripoli (AF)
19:40	Baghdad (AF)
01:35	Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in ffs per 100

Apple	420 / 380
Bananas	450 / 400
Bananas (Muskatana)	520 / 530
Beans	280 / 250
Cabbage	160 / 120
Carrot	240 / 150
Cauliflower	120 / 120
Corn	250 / 200
Cucumbers (large)	180 / 140
Cucumbers (small)	320 / 280
Dates	520 / 500
Eggplant	180 / 150
Garlic	850 / 750
Grapefruit	230 / 200
Lemon	200 / 150
Marrow (large)	100 / 70
Marrow (small)	220 / 180
Onion (dry)	120 / 140
Onion (green)	180 / 160
Orange (Shamouti)	620 / 600
Orange (Shamouti)	300 / 250
Pepper (hot)	150 / 120
Pepper (sweet)	170 / 120
Potato	350 / 280
Radishes	150 / 120
Sage	300 / 400
Spinach	180 / 60

New consumption tax announced

AMMAN (Petra) — In its endeavours to enhance reliance on local revenues the government has imposed a consumption tax on several imported items to protect local production, according to spokesmen for the Customs Department.

The items include carpet and moquette, tobacco, tiles for floors, fireplaces and windows, varnished, glazed or otherwise ceramic, sanitary porcelain, freezers, antennas, insulated

cables and wires. The government also imposed a consumption tax on pure vegetable oil but exempted the new material used in its production.

However, no increase in the consumption tax was made on the following items, which have been moved from the customs tariff to the consumption tax for reform purposes. These items include: pure vegetable oil, tobacco, mar-

ble aggregates and granite, tooth paste, doors, windows and frames, wooden shutters, wall decorations, paper, clothing, blankets, shoes, tiles for walls, floors, fireplaces, ceramic, sanitary porcelain fixtures, glass sheets, gas stoves, aluminum installation, aluminum central heating radiators, ladders, freezers, electric-generating cells, television antennas, insulated electric wires and cables, children's carriages, furniture and video cameras.

BRIEFS

CABINET: The Cabinet has endorsed the appointment of Ahmad Hassan Magabehel as mayor of Ballia and Muhammad Abdul Karim Al Smadi as mayor of Naimah townships. (Petra)

TRANSPORT ACTIVITIES: The Arab Maritime Bridge Company board of directors has reviewed transport activities covering Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. During a meeting held Sunday, the board of directors decided to appoint Sabri Kate' Abed to the post of company director, Jihad Khoury to the post of deputy director general for trade and technical affairs, and Tawfiq Jirjes to the post of deputy director general for administrative and financial affairs. (Petra)

MA'AN HOSPITAL: The National Medical Institution (NMI) has offered a tender to renovate the Ma'an hospital at the cost of JD 65,000. The renovation process includes maintenance of building and facilities as well as asphalted parking and building pavements. (Petra)

WAQAS ELECTIONS: Some 2,463 voters of Waqas township in North Ghor will Monday elect a new municipal council. There are twenty two candidates competing over seven seats. All arrangements have been undertaken to ensure a smooth voting process. (Petra)

ENVIRONMENT: The participants in the regional seminar on the administration of environmental affairs in emergency conditions continued their meetings in Amman Sunday. Three working papers have been reviewed. The first one deals with industrial accidents such as leakage of dangerous chemicals. The second paper deals with the measures necessary to confront man-made catastrophes such as wars, military conflicts, and evacuation of people. The third paper deals with natural disasters and means to expect their occurrence and ways to avoid them. (Petra)

'Technology needed for Islamic food security'

KUWAIT (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has said that dependence on modern technology is the only solution to meet the food needs of the population, requiring cooperation among all Islamic states to reach a common ground in adopting modern technology in their policies.

"The Islamic countries ought to define their development priorities before investing in modern technology because this investment would be futile in the absence of clear policy that makes science and technology a supporter of development plans."

Furthermore, the Islamic

countries ought to increase their investment in the fields of science and technology in order to facilitate dealing with modern technologies. "How can we get into this field while what is being spent in the fields of research and development in most Islamic countries did not reach 0.5 per cent at the best?" Prince Hassan said, in a speech delivered on his behalf by Minister of Education Dr. Adnan Badran during the opening session of the Conference of Modern Technologies and the Development of the Islamic World which began in Kuwait Saturday.

Prince Hassan said that in-

creased knowledge promotes our scientific capabilities, enables us to attain technological growth, and enables us to choose our future.

The Crown Prince said: "Our responsibility in the first place is toward our children and the generations to come so that we can ensure a future without man-made catastrophes. We must not let them inherit a destroyed environment."

Prince Hassan also asserted that "the future lies in the hands of those capable of absorbing these technologies, dealing with them, and using them for the

purpose of serving the objectives of progress and development." A number of outstanding scientists, and representatives of Islamic countries have participated in the four-day conference.

The conference will discuss research papers on the current and futuristic trends in the field of electronics and the present capabilities of the Islamic World in this regard. Furthermore, the discussions will deal with information, biotechnology, advanced biotechnology of energy, and future applications of technology in the fields of food, agriculture, and industry.

Women dissect poor showing in polls

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The election of 80 male deputies to the Lower House of Parliament by an electorate which has an estimated 225,000 women voters has agitated many "women's libbers" and independent progressive elements in the Jordanian society, as was evident in a panel discussion entitled "The role of women in the Jordanian parliamentary elections" Saturday night at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) head office here.

After discussing more than half a dozen reasons for the apparent failure of female candidates to win a seat in Parliament, different views were debated on how potential hopefuls should proceed in an attempt to win at least one seat in Parliament in the next elections.

Four women who ran for the parliamentary office participated in the discussion which was moderated by Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber. Dr. Eida Al Murtaja, Dr. Huda Fakhoury, Mrs. Haifa Al Bashir and Mrs. Janet Al Mufri aired their views about why the parliamentary elections had not produced a single woman deputy.

Bashir, president of the Jordanian Women's Federation, said she felt that there were three main reasons why no female candidate won in the elections.

"The parties — meaning the Muslim Brotherhood — the tribes and monetary budget worked against the possibility that a woman could be elected to parliament," she said.

The first two forces, Bashir said, were the representation of women in Parliament and the last factor was one essential

hindrance to the success of women candidates.

Bashir also said that she thought that "female candidates in Amman would have done much better if Amman had been one electorate district instead of having been split up into seven districts."

A lot of the female candidates in Amman lobbied in the schools among the teachers. "When it was time to register a lot of the female teachers were registered by their husbands in the districts of Amman which had no women candidates, so of course they didn't vote for women," Bashir said.

Bashir had run for one of three hotly contested Muslim seats in the Third District along with two other women, she received 365 votes.

Mufri, who ran for the Circassian seat in the Third District of Amman, said she thought the reasons for the lack of women's success to get a seat in parliament were multifold.

"The reasons that lie behind the failure of female candidates to get elected range from male chauvinism, a lack of women's support for other women, a lack of organisational support for women on the part of existing organisations and the traditional education which has taught men and women that only men are leaders," Mufri told the audience of 150 people.

She said that Arab and Islamic societies had glorified for too long the "woman who is a good mother and good wife. They have never asked about good fathers and husbands."

Mufri who received 2,604 votes said she was disappointed that only approximately 21,000 people out of an electorate of

550,000 had voted for women.

Mudraq, who previously served on the National Consultative Council (NCC) and received the second highest number of votes that any female candidate in Jordan received while running for one of seven Muslim seats in the Irbid Governorate, said that as far as she knew she was the only person in her governorate who did not buy votes.

The rather strong accusation received "ahs" and "oos" from the audience.

"Women had no support of any kind," she told the crowd, "we were not only sidetracked by the Muslim Brotherhood, we were also excluded by the leftists and nationalists, who acted as if we did not exist."

Fakhoury who ran for one of the two Christian seats in the Balqa Governorate and received 2,978 votes agreed with Mudraq and went even further to say that "the head of the women's federation in Balqa would not even see me, not to mention support me in my candidacy or allow me to use the facilities of the women's federation for my campaign."

Fakhoury said that although she had originally been against the quota system for women parliamentarians, "in the absence of parties I might support a quota system."

She said that if and when parties were allowed in Jordan, women might have a better chance if they had a major force such as a party to back them up.

Although many women in the audience called for a quota system to guarantee one or more seats for women in the parliament both Murtaja and Fakhoury said they hoped the formation of political parties would not make quotas for female parliamentarians necessary.

Arab psychiatrists to meet in Sana'a

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Psychiatrists Association will take part in the 4th Arab psychiatrists conference, which will be held in Sana'a Tuesday.

Taking part in the three-day conference will be 300 Arab psychiatrists, including representatives for the Arab Psychiatrists Union.

In a departure statement, President of the Union Adnan Takriti said that the conference will discuss a working paper on psychosocial diseases, mental diseases, addiction, psychic drugs, in addition to the effects of persecution and terror on the mental health.

Takriti added that three specialised symposia will be held on the sidelines of the conference. These symposia will tackle issues pertaining to the Islamic perspective of mental diseases, problems of mental disease in the Arab World, monitoring the brain activity through computerised brain planning and measuring the physiological, and neurological activity.

Takriti pointed out that he will present to the conference a working paper on psychic drugs and addiction in Jordan.



HAMDAN OPENS IRAQI BOOK EXHIBITION

IRBID (J.T.) — Yarmouk University Saturday organised an Iraqi book exhibition in cooperation with a publishing house in Baghdad. On display at the four-day exhibition which was opened by University President Mohammad Hamdan are collections of books dealing with politics, eco-

nomy, public administration, history, law, psychology, physical education, biology, agriculture and religion, as well as children's books. Several Iraqi embassy staff were present at the opening ceremony.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition of paintings and etchings inspired by Arabic Islamic art at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.
- ★ An art exhibition by artists from Jordan and other Arab countries at Al Wasiti Gallery, Plaza Hotel.
- ★ Book exhibition at the University of Yarmouk.
- ★ An art exhibition by Ghassan Al Hameed, Abid Atwan and Abdallah Nawwadah at the Jordanian Paistic Artists Association, Shmeisani.
- ★ An art exhibition of water colours by Jordan artist Ahmad Issmail at the Gallery, Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental.
- ★ An exhibition organised by the Goethe Institute entitled "The Blue Rider" at the Jordan University of Science and Technology, Irbid.
- ★ An art exhibition by Jordanian artist Shaker Murji at the British Council.

LECTURE

- ★ A lecture by Dr. Musa Kellani, by invitation of the Rotary Club of Jordan and the Arab Affairs Council, entitled "Jordan elections from a cultural perspective — a setback or a step forward" at Amra Hotel — 2:00 p.m.

CONCERT

- ★ A concert by Scandinavian troupe Suomen Laulu Choir at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.

FILM

- ★ A French film entitled "Le Crime de Monsieur Lange" at the French Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.

SOME PEOPLE DON'T TAKE STUDYING BY MAIL SERIOUSLY

Some people believe that you cannot get a good education through Distance Education. Some people believe that because you are getting your education through a correspondence school that you don't have to work for your diploma or your degree. Some people confuse "phony degree mills" with legitimate Distance Education Schools. If you are one of these people, don't read any further. ICS is looking for people who take their education SERIOUSLY, whether attending a traditional college or studying by mail. We are looking for people who will apply themselves and work hard to get the full value of the training that ICS offers. Diplomas and Degrees are issued upon successful completion of a course accredited by the National Home Study Council, your guarantee of a quality education. If you take your education seriously and want to train for a new career or improve your job skills for advancement on your present job, ICS may have the right career training for you. Choose from 45 career courses listed below. Select the one career field you would like to train for and indicate that choice in the coupon below. Cut out this ad and mail it to ICS TODAY. We will send you a detailed course outline and tuition schedule by return Air Mail. There is no obligation.

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ASSOCIATE IN SPECIALIZED BUSINESS DEGREE PROGRAMS

50 Business Management	56 Computer Programming	64 Auto Mechanics
51 Accounting	57 U.S. High School Diploma	65 Bookkeeping
52 Business Management with option in Marketing	58 Catering/Gourmet Cooking	66 Electronics
53 Business Management with option in Finance	59 Medical Dental Office Asst.	67 Secretarial
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Editorial Director:

RAKAN AL MAJALI

Director General:

DR. RADI AL WAQFI

Editor-in-Chief:

DR. WALEED M. SADI

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
 University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171-6, 670141-4, 684311, 684366

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

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Respect peoples' basic rights

ON the top of the agenda of the Bush-Gorbachev summit in the stormy sea of Malta is of course the issue of the reunification of Germany. At a time when Washington has praised the efforts to unify the two existing German states, Moscow and other capitals on both sides of the East-West divide have voiced strong reservations about the idea if not down right opposition to it. This is indeed perplexing to all the peoples and nations of the world that uphold the right to self-determination as an enshrined right that no power should be allowed to undermine or interfere with. Yet one still hears voices objecting to the reunification of Germany as if that decision is theirs and theirs alone. Whatever happened to the voice of the German people in this very important matter and whoever assigned to other powers the right to speak on what is best for Germany and the German people?

It seems that part of the anxiety being built up around the inevitable reunification of Germany is the past history of Nazi Germany which had indeed perpetrated crimes of unimaginable proportions against humanity and threatened the stability and security of the entire world. Accordingly, what was objectionable about World War II Germany was never its sheer size or power but the fact that it was governed by a Nazi regime which violated the rights of the German people as much as it violated the rights of other peoples and countries. Once the cause of the fear is eliminated by the substitution of fascism and Nazism by an operational democratic system of government then there is no more cause to fear a giant democratic Germany which with its new strength, both economic and technological, can be a more potent power to establish and contribute to the stability and progress in the four corners of the world.

We the peoples and countries of the Middle East who had suffered more than enough from the denial of our rights to exercise our right to self-determination in the recent past, and the Palestinian people who are still being denied that cardinal and inalienable right, attach paramount importance to the respect and observance of that global right everywhere in the world including Germany and Palestine. The thought of delegating to other countries and peoples the right to speak on behalf of others is therefore anathema to the dearest ideals that we faithfully uphold. We are not only astonished but also angered by any attempt to interfere with the exercise of the right to self-determination in any part of the world and what we ask for ourselves we cannot rightfully deny to others.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily called Sunday for a fruitful dialogue between the Parliament deputies themselves and between them and the executive authority in the service of the country's best interests. The paper warned against evil elements lying in wait for this nation, and called for vigilance, lest the enemies delve through breaches in the walls into the fabric of society. The paper referred to a statement by the speaker of the Lower House of Parliament on television last Friday in which he described democracy as a dangerous thing. The paper said that the speaker had in mind the present dangerous situation the country is facing and the King's decision at the right moment calling on the representatives of the people to take the matters in their own hands under very hard circumstances. The paper also noted that the resumption of parliamentary life in the Kingdom as King Hussein had planned, removed a major obstacle before the government and the people and paved the ground for a responsible group of representatives and deputies to contribute towards the achievement of further progress and development in Jordan.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Sunday comments on the current Israeli escalation of repression against the Palestinian people under its rule. Tareq Masarwa cites as an example Israel's murdering of four young people in Nablus and its continued and persistent campaign of atrocities against the local population in the occupied Arab territories. The writer says that the Israelis are following the example of the Latin American countries like El Salvador where government death squads roam the country, murdering innocent people in a bid to impose a terrorist regime on the innocent citizens and force them to succumb to government dictatorship. The writer says that the Israelis have been pursuing atrocities including indiscriminate killing of Palestinians, starving refugee camps and committing all sorts of crimes as the world continues to watch and as those who brag about human rights remain dead silent. The writer expresses the view that Israel's atrocities would be returned in kind, and the Palestinians should make of all Israeli homes, factories vehicles and installations their resistance targets, causing wide-spread damage to them and doing what the Israelis have taught them to do, using all available means to defend themselves and liberate their homeland.

Al Dustour daily commented Sunday on the superpower summit in Malta and said that the people of the Mediterranean region attach real hopes to that meeting in view of the numerous problems and the dangerous situation they are facing. The paper said although there are signs of détente between the East and West, and despite the rapprochement between Washington and Moscow, the Middle East remains in turmoil, and the Arab-Israeli conflict remains unresolved. The paper said the two superpowers have indeed cooperated to defuse world tension and end regional conflicts in some parts of the world other than the Middle East which remains an explosive area due to Israel's intransigence and its rejection of peace.

Weekly Political Pulse

Winds of change have yet to reach many places

WHILE the Gorbachevian revolution has signalled the loss of the ideological race by communism to Western-style pluralism, it has nevertheless performed the ultimate service to humanity by signalling the end of the prospect of global nuclear war. Seen in this light, reformation and enlightenment in Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, have in effect saved mankind from the shadow of a mass destructive war that has threatened life per se on planet Earth with extinction. It would not be an exaggeration, therefore, to hail the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev as the saviour of life and environment on Earth for giving the green light for launching an age of enlightenment all across Eastern Europe.

Without Gorbachev, none of the magnificent changes that have swept across Eastern Europe could have occurred with such swiftness and ease. This is not to suggest that the Soviet president should alone be credited for all the changes and transformations that have taken place in Eastern Europe. Rather it is an admission that without the kind of progressive and enlightened leadership that Gorbachev has been offering, all attempts to effect reformation in Eastern Europe would have been stubbornly rejected even by force. Many future generations will therefore pay tribute to the one special leader who reduced the prospects of total annihilation of man and environment. He will surely go down in history as the "saviour" of life on planet Earth for which mankind owes him perpetual gratitude and appreciation.

But global nuclear and thermonuclear warfare is not the only danger confronting man, albeit it is the major apocalypse that is hanging heavily on the shoulders of the peoples of the world. As long as proliferation of nuclear arms and other mass destructive weapons goes unchecked, many small nations could be projected as potential possessors of such weapons. Thus at a time when the probabilities of global nuclear wars have receded, regional nuclear wars, especially among developing countries that lack the scruples against the use of such weapons, can be viewed as having increased.

The only salvation for the peoples of the various regions of the world, which can be regarded as being continuously threatened by mass destructive weapons, be they nuclear, chemical or biological, is to speed up the wind of change that has crossed Eastern Europe and allow it to cross the shores and boundaries of other countries. And by accelerating the process of reformation one does not think in terms of mechanical and technological manifestations. Prime examples of countries with advanced technology but backward in intellectual technology and political philosophy are Israel and South Africa. Both countries have all the semblances of advanced nations and regard themselves as part of the Western heritage. In fact neither country can qualify as part and parcel of the era of reformation. Take for example Israel. In spite of the fallacious facade of being part of the Western

civilisation and boasting as the only democracy in a "sea of darkness," Israel's body politic, like that of South Africa's, has yet to reconcile itself to accepting other peoples' basic human rights. Suffice to recall in this context the adoption of the basic law course that the ongoing debate on the adoption of the basic law (Human Rights) in Israel has taken. With both main political parties in Israel, Labour and Likud, offering to sacrifice the cause of human rights in Israel on the altar of expediency and power politics, one can easily conclude that the gap between Israel and true Western civilisation is indeed wide.

And what applies to Israel applies with equal force to South Africa which looks Western on the surface but very much medieval in substance. And it so happens that both countries have gone nuclear and their possession of such weapons have propelled other countries in their respective regions to seek an appropriate deterrent. It is only natural and logical that countries in the two respective regions of the Middle East and Southern Africa, which reject hegemony, would want to seek deterrents of one kind or another. And in due course the proliferation of nuclear or other mass destructive weapon systems would pose an even greater threat to life and environment on planet Earth. It is therefore imperative that greater efforts be exerted to check such new threats emanating from smaller and less developed countries by the introduction of enlightenment and reformation to within their borders.

By Waleed Sadi

The timid passivity of Bush and Baker

By Nasser Aruri

WHEN placed in the historical context of U.S. involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel's proposed plan for elections in the occupied territories and the Bush administration's attempt to effect Palestinian-Israeli negotiations offer few prospects of a resolution. The diplomatic history of the Middle East during the past two decades reveals that half a dozen U.S. administrations have stood consistently in opposition to a settlement supported by an international consensus — one that would provide for an end to the Israeli occupation and a beginning of Palestinian statehood. At the same time, Israel has managed to reject every single U.S. initiative involving a territorial settlement, even when such initiatives excluded Palestinian sovereignty. The Palestinians have thus been confronted with two protagonists intent on denying them a national existence.

The intifada represents the latest Palestinian response to this joint U.S.-Israeli endeavour of 20 years. Washington's sudden awakening to the fact the status quo in the occupied West Bank and Gaza was untenable came in February 1988, after five years of diplomatic paralysis. The Shultz plan was introduced then to simply reaffirm U.S. custodianship over the Middle East, to elbow out other serious plans and to protect Israel's image in the U.S., which has been tarnished by its brutal attempts to suppress the intifada. Mr. Shultz had endorsed Israel's attempt to contain the intifada but his approach was different. He issued an invitation to the Palestinians to explore a solution based on the Reagan Plan and Camp David, with language like "full autonomy", transitional periods, elections for a "self governing authority", and some kind of association with Jordan, none of which was likely to incur serious Israeli opposition. And yet when the PLO recognised Israel's "right to exist", "renounced terrorism" and called for a two-state solution, the Reagan administration merely agreed to no more than talking to the PLO sporadically at a fairly low-level, and on the basis of a very narrow agenda.

From the American point of view these talks constitute a forum from which to lecture the PLO on the requirements of accepted behaviour in the hope that the PLO would act, as interlocutor for the Palestinians in the

West Bank and Gaza. Both Mr. Shultz and Mr. Baker issued denials that the talks constituted negotiations, despite the fact that the PLO had met Kissinger's and Reagan's terms for such negotiations.

Thus the Reagan-Shultz legacy to the Bush administration has not been reversed by the dialogue with the PLO. In fact, the new administration's approach to the conflict exhibits an even stronger commitment to the Israeli position. Furthermore, it lacks the apparent urgency with which Mr. Shultz tried to respond to the intifada.

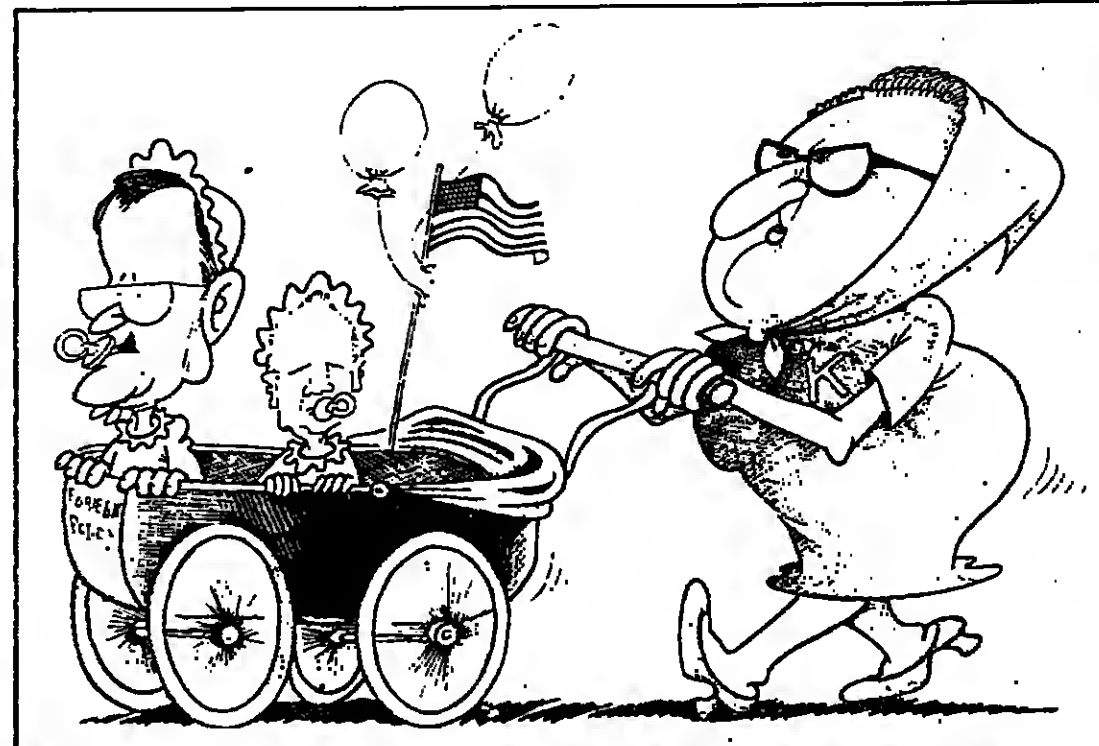
The passive Bush administration

When the Bush administration finally decided that the Middle East could not be ignored any longer, it moved with characteristic caution and passivity. The fear of doing the wrong thing seems to haunt this administration to the extent that it tends to encourage other parties to sponsor initiatives. This curious method of using surrogates on the diplomatic front saw the administration push Shamir and Mubarak to attack their imprimatur to the peace plan that Washington would sponsor.

The diplomatic void was filled by the so-called elections plan, a rather safe bet for the Bush administration, which induced it and elevated it to the centre of its Middle East diplomacy. The plan itself, of course, had to be sponsored by Israel, whose defence minister had earlier conceived it as a means to stop the intifada and provide the U.S. Congress with the necessary justification to maintain the status quo. The substance of the plan, however, was totally rejectionist, which should raise the question of whether the administration is seriously exploring a viable settlement.

Baker plays it safe

The administration, however, continued to try to "play it safe", with a major address by Secretary Baker to the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on May 22. Its list of "dos" and "don'ts" placed the administration in the position of arbiter, albeit an active bystander whose intense scrutiny would fall short of pronouncing a verdict. The mild rebuke it drew from Shamir as "useless" was not quite as bad as his response to the Shultz Plan: "bad, unwelcome



and impractical". The fact is, however, that the demands which Baker made on the Palestinians and the Arabs were more specific than those made on Israel and they went beyond those made by his predecessor. He urged them to produce a "constructive" response to "Israel's initiatives". He commanded the Palestinians to "translate the dialogue of violence in the intifada into a dialogue of politics and diplomacy". He asked them to accept a transitional period of autonomy prior to a final settlement. He warned them not to "distort international organisations" by seeking admission to membership in the United Nations' specialised agencies. He wanted them to convince the Israelis of their peaceful intentions, to accept as a real opening the elections proposed by the Shamir government and to "understand that no one is going to deliver Israel for you."

As for Israel, the new element in Mr. Baker's AIPAC speech was merely the language: "Now is the time to lay aside, once and for all, the unrealistic vision of a greater Israel... Forswear annexation. Stop settlement activity. Allow schools to reopen. Reach out to the Palestinians as neighbours who deserve political rights."

Mr. Baker clearly places the onus for breaking the impasse on the Palestinians and the Arab World, which he warned to "take concrete steps towards accom-

modation with Israel", and insisted that such steps could not be outside the framework of the so-called peace process. He therefore ignored previous Arab efforts on behalf of accommodation which span two decades, beginning with U.N. mediator Gunnar Jarring in 1970 and including the numerous resolutions adopted by Arab summit conferences calling for mutual recognition.

Using Egypt

If sponsoring elections through Israel was the first phase of Bush and Baker's diplomacy, selling the plan to the Palestinians through Egypt was the second phase. But Mubarak's ten-point plan was rejected by Israel, notwithstanding its capitulatory character. Consider the procedurally oriented amendments it offered, with no mention of Palestinian independence, or its accommodation of the Likud by finding a new "legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people.

Baker's response to his recalcitrant ally was five "suggested points", again carefully avoiding the impression that there was any "American plan" and keeping the U.S. away from the centre of the negotiating process. The intent of the "suggested points" is to hold a meeting for the foreign ministers of Egypt, Israel and the U.S. in order to decide who is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians. After all, Mr. Sha-

mir is not only rejecting the PLO in that role but he has objections to a broad range of Palestinians involved in the uprising in the occupied territories.

That the Shamir government is stalling and perpetuating the trap is well known. What is interesting is that Shamir has virtually turned down his own proposal, which some of his allies in the Likud coalition believe offered the Palestinians too much. Herein lay the disagreement between him and Baker. But Mr. Shamir is being approached with kid gloves by all players. Baker will not push him into a corner and risk a collapse of his fragile "national unity" government. Mubarak has a vested interest in a settlement.

The PLO, which has the most to lose by its own disenfranchisement and the political extermination of the Palestinian people, opted against rejecting the charade, being fully aware that it amounts to no more than a repackaged Camp David. In fact, the PLO encouraged Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories to meet Israeli officials and the Bush administration's first high ranking delegation in May 1988, while its own contacts with Washington were limited to the level of U.S. functionaries in Tunis. This is the extent to which the PLO has gone to avoid being seen as a spoiler. It hopelessly tries to push the U.S. to take seriously what Israel had in fact

started as a public relations exercise.

Baker's myopic vision

Meanwhile the real objective of Israel's election proposal is to throw the ball back into the Palestinian court, to create a division between the PLO and the intifada leadership, to break the U.S.-PLO talks by forcing the latter to criticise Baker's feeble attitude towards Shamir and to create a rift between the PLO and the Arab states. What Washington wants from the PLO, having exhausted all means of promoting Jordan as interlocutor, is to deliver the Palestinian leadership in the occupied territories — ie to acquiesce in the process of substituting self-government for statehood.

The desired outcome of Mr. Baker's renewed "peace process" is not difficult to predict. His AIPAC speech found symmetry between the Arab dream of an independent state on less than 25 per cent of pre-1948 Palestine and the dream of a greater Israel in the whole of Palestine. Therein lay his compromise. The Palestinians would have to sink below their minimal position, while Israel would correspondingly trim its maximalist position. But even this myopic vision conflicts with the plans of Mr. Shamir, who was elected on a platform excluding withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza and who considers that Israel's obligations under Resolution 242 have already been met by withdrawal from Sinai.

Should any disagreement occur between Washington and Tel Aviv it would be over the interpretation of 242. But given the timidity displayed so far by the Bush administration and the intimidation of U.S. legislators by the Israeli lobby, U.S. pressure on the Shamir government is not in the offing. The U.S. is likely to continue its attempts to pressure its Arab friends and to extract concessions from the PLO in order to assure an outcome that would preserve as much of the status quo as possible.

In the meantime, the PLO has not only played Arafat's "last card" — ie recognition of Israel, but the intifada card as well. It has resulted in a meagre dialogue which Washington has so far used to preach to the PLO from the pulpit. The Palestinians will have to develop new strategies to move the U.S. beyond the dialogue — Middle East International, London.

For Gorbachev, a crisis with no solution

By Peter Reddaway

WASHINGTON — In the world of Mikhail Gorbachev, history is marching backward. The forces of nationalism and religion are rising, the socialist dominoes of Eastern Europe are falling and a growing number of Soviet republics are in turmoil. Communist economics are an acknowledged failure, a winter of discontent is at hand and much of the party's self-serving history is now a grudgingly admitted lie. The result is that the Soviet regime is going through a profound crisis of legitimacy.

It is a crisis with no apparent resolution. In contrast to the peoples of Poland, Hungary and East Germany, the Soviet people have not yet internalised the values needed for negotiating the rocky road to democracy and free markets.

Mr. Gorbachev calls perestroika a revolution, and some domestic groups have taken him at his word, going well beyond what he wants. But most Soviet citizens are being asked to run before they can walk. In the process, tremendous social confusion, disorder and economic de-

cline have set in. It would be difficult in the best of circumstances for the Kremlin to get out of this situation. But given the tyranny and deception Mr. Gorbachev inherited from the Stalinist past, his task approaches the impossible.

What then is the near-term Soviet future? The following essay represents my best guesses. Mikhail Gorbachev is obviously at the centre of that Soviet future, at least for the next few months or even years. But the evidence suggests that his real as opposed to formal authority is sinking, not only among the demoralised political elite, but in liberal circles and among the increasingly disillusioned Soviet people.

The immediate prospects are grim, and the long-term prospects are even grimmer. There is no evidence that the system can be successfully revitalised under Communist leadership.

The bold attempt to transfer power and authority to the Soviets — the popularly elected councils — is faltering; the party increasingly sees these bodies as a threat. Nor can the system muddle through, implementing a viable perestroika and managing

popular unrest. Developments within the Soviet Union are too volatile for that, and the democratic revolutionaries of Eastern Europe can only increase that volatility by inspiring non-communist and anti-communist groups in the Soviet Union by their example.

Beyond the supply shortages, social disorder, ethnic strife, strikes and mushrooming crime that are already visible, lie almost inevitable major power clashes.

Just in October, according to a report in The Washington Post, Mr. Gorbachev privately warned the United States "that he may be obliged to take steps that seem inconsistent with his goal of democratising Soviet society."

This is not surprising. For several months liberal intellectuals have been floating the idea that the economic and political situations are so threatening that Mr. Gorbachev ought to be given temporary special powers so that he can restore order, outlaw strikes, force people to tighten their belts and reverse the dangerous centrifugal forces at work in the republics.

If this has been happening with Mr. Gorbachev's encouragement, it indicates that although

he possesses an enormous amount of formal authority, he may feel that he lacks the wide popular support that would enable him to crack down. Gaining a nod of toleration from President Bush is probably a Gorbachev goal for the coming Malta summit.

What options is Mr. Gorbachev likely to be considering? His recent initial steps of ordering the MVD (internal police) riot units to deal more roughly with selected demonstrations, and of hectoring liberal editors and intellectuals for two hours on Oct. 13, may have heartened conservatives and Russian nationalists, but they will no more than temporarily intimidate the liberals and dissidents.

How then might Mr. Gorbachev escalate? He might remove a few liberal editors or close down a publication or two, or break a strike or an important demonstration with violence and arrests. Or he might order the arrest of opposition leaders around the country. He might seek special powers from the Supreme Soviet and declare a state of emergency in more areas than the currently affected Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Mol-

davia. Or — an extreme step — he could postpone some or all of the approaching local and republic-level elections. But such half-measures almost certainly would backfire. They would provoke outrage from all the opposition groups and create concern abroad, but they would not solve — and would probably exacerbate — all the real problems.

Could Mr. Gorbachev launch the sort of all-out offensive against dissent and opposition that the conservatives have long been calling for? Probably not. That would destroy his own perestroika, and the conservatives might soon replace him with a more credible and trustworthy "counter-revolutionary."

Mr. Gorbachev is probably in little short-term danger from the incipient conservative backlash. Conservatives at present have no credible leader and no credible programme. Yegor Ligachev, the best-known hardliner, is 69, widely discredited with the public and too cautious to lead a coup. And conservatives in all institutions have been repeatedly knocked off balance by Mr. Gorbachev's political infighting skills, and are still in disarray. The military has weak leaders

and has been placed on the defensive by a range of Gorbachev initiatives for military reform. It is unpopular with much of the public. Since its involvement in the Tbilisi killings of April 9, when 20 demonstrators were killed in the Georgian capital, the army has been saying that it should never again be used for internal policing purposes unless the Supreme Soviet approves.

As for the KGB, its head, Vladimir Kriuchkov, is carrying out pro-Gorbachev policies and successfully controlling the growing conservative discontent in his ranks. The MVD is likewise in apparently pro-Gorbachev hands, and the head of its "internal troops" recently announced that these troops will never be used to break up strikes. He also said his troops number only 36,000 but will rise to 62,700 over two years (evidently by hiring KGB border guards, whose numbers are being cut).

Forty-four per cent of the current forces, he said, are now deployed in the Transcaucasus alone. It seems evident that the crucial element for a major crackdown — plenty of MVD troops — is not now available — The Washington Post.

Healers, educators, and handicapped people: Working small miracles to create fuller lives

Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday inaugurated the College of Occupational Therapy at Farah Royal Jordanian Rehabilitation Centre in Amman.

AT THE OCCUPATIONAL Therapy College and the Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped, funds provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other donors are being used to insure fuller more rewarding lives for sick and handicapped children and adults. Both organisations focus on holistic treatment of disability, and provide a service once lacking in Jordan.

In September Jordan's first college for occupational therapy opened at the Farah Rehabilitation Unit of the King Hussein Medical Centre in Amman. The college is run by a voluntary board of directors under the umbrella of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS). With a USAID grant of over \$200,000 the college has begun training Jordan's first occupational therapists. These twelve diploma students, and those who will enter the programme in years to come, will fill a pressing need in the field of therapy and rehabilitation. Jordan needs an estimated 150 occupational therapists — one per 20,000 people — to serve its present population. There are currently only three Jordanian occupational therapists, all treating patients at the Farah Unit, and all teaching students in the new college as well. PLO is the first practitioner in Jordan in 1983, heads the team which includes Lieutenant Widad Akrouk and Captain Nisreen Kasim, now studying in England. These therapists assist physicians and surgeons at the hospital in the initial phases of patient treatment as well as rehabilitative treatment during the healing process. Captain Smadi focuses on care for

spinal injury patients, while Lieutenant Akrouk specialises in the care of burn patients. Early intervention with such patients can ameliorate the crippling effects of their injuries.

Occupational therapy is NOT training to help disabled people to get jobs. Occupational therapy is medically prescribed treatment that uses work — whether the daily living tasks of dressing, bathing, etc., or the vocational tasks of sewing, hammering, lifting, computer operation, etc. — to strengthen muscles, increase range of movement, restore coordination and balance, and increase self-confidence and self-esteem. Using their knowledge of anatomy and physiology, kinesiology, psychology, and other disciplines, occupational therapists play a vital role in the treatment of arthritis, burns, fractures, cerebral palsy, cardiovascular disease, and other disabling conditions. On a recent morning, the therapists provided outpatient service to some 20 clients including a four-year old spina bifida patient, a young woman whose polio-stricken leg is being lengthened nearly 6 centimetres through bone grafts, a woman who lost most of her fingers in a burn accident, and a robust young man whose severed hand was reimplanted by King Hussein Centre surgeons after a workplace accident. Additionally, the therapists make regular ward rounds and care on call by the surgeons and specialists at the Medical Centre.

To augment the services of the occupational therapists at Farah Unit, the private voluntary sector in Jordan intermittently recruits expatriate therapists at great cost to work for brief periods in Jordan. By training Jordan's young people in this field, the new

college is insuring that this service will be more available and more affordable, and that it will be delivered by professionals with first-hand knowledge of the language and societal norms. Furthermore, the training is an avenue to financially and professionally rewarding employment for dedicated young men and women.

"We are the first to be educated in Jordan," said one student. "There is a scarcity in this field, and we're responding to the need." As additional classes of students enroll in the diploma programme, the college will outgrow its facilities at the Medical Centre. It is hoped that within three years the college will relocate to the University of Jordan as a degree programme, according to Joseph Busuttil, Director. Busuttil has developed the curriculum for the programme and is introducing psychiatric services to the occupational therapy field in Jordan. Busuttil indicated that although the college is only two months old, it has already prompted inquiries from neighbouring countries interested in sending students for training.

One of the organisations that will eagerly employ the new graduates is the Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped. The Society has grown out of the almost daily efforts of Princess Majda Ra'ad and a corps of dedicated volunteers. It now employs a staff of 58 and serves 160 children and young adults at its attractive elementary school, dormitory, and workshops on Jabal Amman.

The newest building in the complex is a 3-storey vocational rehabilitation facility built through a grant from USAID and a generous donation from a local businessman. It houses workshops that train and employ handicapped young adults in sewing and handicrafts, TV and radio repair, and book binding. The sale of these services and pro-

ducts will provide a much needed steady source of income for the workers and the Society as well. Having become proficient in their trades, some of the trainees stay on as employees at Al Hussein while others have become valuable employees of private sector firms or started their own businesses.

USAID recently funded a 2-month consultation by a vocational rehabilitation specialist, Sydney Heymann, a volunteer with the International Executive Service Corps (IESC). Heymann helped the society to finalise plans for vocational activities, acquiring a TV simulator for diagnosing and testing repairs which was donated by the Yarmouk University of Science and Technology, and ordering radio repair training kits. The TV repair shops diagnoses problems and provides customers with prompt estimates and repairs that are guaranteed for 30-days.

Plans are underway to launch a book binding business that will employ six persons. Scheduled to start in December, the business will convert imported soft bound text books to durable hardbound texts for the Jordan Book Centre serving the University of Jordan. Additionally, a specialised shop at Al Hussein manufactures various individually fitted prostheses needed within the school community.

The facilities now available in Jordan to serve handicapped people are first rate and they are staffed by talented and dedicated professionals and volunteers. These facilities, concentrated in Amman, are also stretched and cannot serve many who are now in need. The creation of the Occupational Therapy College is a major step in developing the talent that will help handicapped people and their families towards the fuller lives they are capable of and so richly deserve.

MEGA-SUCCESS as a singer has never been enough for high priestess of pop Madonna. She craves acting applause, too.

Time and again, she has offered herself up as a human sacrifice to the critics. Again and again, they have devoured her. Now her jinx-hit film career is facing another letdown.

Madonna was pinning all her hopes on Dick Tracy, co-starring and directed by Warren Beatty.

But Beatty has been hit with a crippling law suit brought by four top Hollywood production companies who claim they own the film rights because Beatty broke an agreement over profits.

Beatty, who fell in love with Madonna on the set and is now also co-starring in her life, has vowed to fight the claim all the way, but even if he wins, it will probably delay the release planned for next summer.

There has already been talk in Hollywood that there was nothing to hold up its release this year — except a fear that it was not strong enough to compete in an exceptional field with the likes of Batman and Indiana Jones.

And insiders are speculating about why Madonna, who certainly doesn't need the money, wanted to put her ego on the line again.

Material Girl sold more than 60 million records and made her one of America's top earners. Her debut album was in the U.S. charts for a staggering 12 months. Her second made triple platinum in just 14 weeks.

She notched up 17 consecutive Top Ten singles, five of which were number ones. Last year, she came second only to Mary Tyler Moore in the high-earning women-in-showbiz stakes with an estimated take of \$30 million.

But most of that came from a phenomenal concert tour. Had she concentrated on music and given acting a miss, she might have come even closer to Tyler Moore's staggering \$82 million.

Instead, she invested months in a Broadway play, Speed the Plough, only to be rewarded with the headline in the New York Daily News: "No, she can't act."

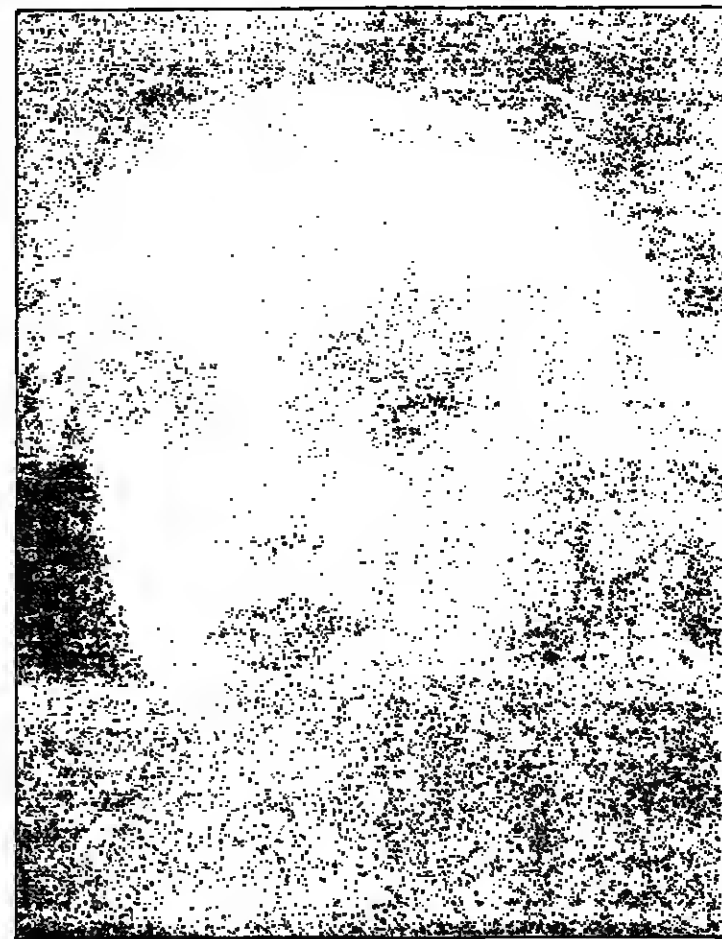
Beneath which, critic Howard Kissel praised the play's elegance, direction, clarity and wit and concluded: "I bet it would be even funnier with an actress in it."

"Her ineptitude is scandalously thorough," said CBS reviewer, Dennis Cunningham.

Sophisticated New York audiences walked out complaining of her amateurism or stayed in their seats and laughed at it.

Yet if the 31-year-old professional trumpet with a lust for acclaim found it tough to take, there was daily therapy on tap for her as she drove to and from the theatre in her black stretch limo complete with entourage.

Mohs of Wannabees were gathered around the stage door for a glimpse, stopping traffic and infuriating the police who had to



Madonna — she won acclaim for her voice — but will she win acclaim for her acting?

An ego is on the line

hold them back and attempt to keep the city moving.

Last year was not much better. Madonna was voted Worst Actress of the Year, for the second year running.

She got the Golden Raspberry for her role in Who's That Girl. One critic described her performance as "frighteningly bad." And speculation was mounting that her latest film, Bloodhounds of Broadway, with Matt Dillon and Jennifer Grey was so bad it might never be released.

They year before she had bombed with audiences and critics in Shanghai Surprise co-starring her ex-husband, Sean Penn.

One American critic called the film "awesome in its awfulness, momentous in its ineptness, shattering in its stupidity."

But nothing and nobody seems able to convince her she should capitalise on her strengths and forget what she does badly — or at least sign up for acting lessons before she tries again.

"I wanted to be a superstar from the word go," she says.

"One of my idols was Marilyn Monroe. I've always wanted to leave the kind of impression that Marilyn did, to arouse so many different feelings in people."

The birth of the pop video has narrowed the gap between pop performer and actor/actress. Madonna is not the first to attempt to cross the bridge.

She made the transition in stages. In Vision Quest, her only films were in her songs.

Even before that, there had been a soft porn film, A Certain Sacrifice, made back in 1980 before the desperately ambitious Madonna had achieved celebrity status. It was later to come back to haunt — and infuriate — her.

She tried, unsuccessfully, to have it banned.

Her first major film was Desperately Seeking Susan, for which she had her first and last good reviews. With hindsight, perhaps she came across with such convincing cheeky, bounce because she was simply playing herself.

Whatever the explanation, it

gave her a taste of the life of movies and music she has never been press since.

She said: "To have all the glamour and making movies. It's good. I have a lot of always wanted to acting."

She formed her own production company. Since then, she named her first movies: Angel Flight, a remake of the 1957 train. So far, it has been a flop.

Madonna also yearns to do a remake of the Marlene Dietrich classic, The Blue Angel, and has asked Diane Keaton to direct it.

But one of the most bitter blows of all has been losing the role of Evita in the hands of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical of the same name in which she refused to screen test.

The makers had already decided that if they did go ahead, they would insist on a "good behaviour clause" under which if Madonna arrived late or caused delays she could be fired or face a pay cut.

That followed the problems on the set of George Harrison film, Shanghai Surprise, which had the crew tearing out their hair even before the critics unleashed their fire.

At one point, producer Harrison had to fly to China to act as peacemaker and quell the storms caused by the Poison Punks.

If Madonna the Wannabee film star has been sailing through stormy water, her videos have been in trouble, too.

The British Cable Authority's decision that too-sexy videos like her Like a Virgin cannot go out before 10 p.m. is just the latest in a long line of bans and protests.

In the wake of Like a Prayer's release in April, Pepsi Cola dropped a television advertisement for which Madonna had been paid \$3 million, after a single U.S. showing. Opponents labelled the video blasphemous and threatened Pepsi with a boycott if they carried on using the ad.

Of course such tongue-lashing for the raunchy singer from the older generation only serve to enhance her appeal in the eyes of the fans, many now only half her age, to whom she is a role model of successful non-conformity.

But record sales are not enough for the third of eight children of an Italian-American family who at five told her father she was going to New York to be famous and at 17 packed her \$35 savings and large hunky doll and went.

It took her just five years to "scratch and claw my way up" from a cockroach-infested slum tenement to an apartment with a view over Central Park and a fortress mansion in the Hollywood Hills.

"I don't believe in pussy-footing about," she said. "I'm tough, ambitious, and I know exactly what I want. If that makes me a bitch, okay." — Arab Times.

Magicians of the earth

By Jean-Marc Dupnich

THE FIRST world exhibition of contemporary art was recently held in Paris at the Georges Pompidou Centre and the Large Hall at La Villette. It was an art exhibition devoted to contemporary art, not modern art. That is to say, art that is not represented in the variety of its civilisations, giving a special place to works until now reserved for ethnological or anthropological museums.

The exhibition well deserves its name of "Magicians of the Earth", not only because it links up with the idea of art as enchantment, but because a large number of the exhibitors are witch-doctors, priests and servants of old local religions which have been safeguarded.

It is pleasing to see that, at a time when avant-garde artists, who are also present in the exhibition, are running out of steam, nervy with looking for new ideas, traditional artists dazzle us with the beauty of a living art, perpetuating a magic and artistic practice, celebrating the perennality of man and of the forces of nature. This art is not fixed in time, as the objects and languages of the 20th century are integrated. Nor is it an art added to the past. But an eternal art, always new as every day recreates the world and as the ancestors are invited to the life of the community.

One will thus not be surprised at the importance devoted to myths about the creation of the world and the group, with the huge cloth mask by the Nigerian Mike Chukwura, a "veritable spiritual monument, both an image of cosmogony and a hymn to the power of the community", with the Song of the Morning Star, painted on bark, a song of the creation of the world and the spirit of the ancestors, by the Australian Aborigine Jack Wamwam, with the houses of the men of Papua-New Guinea, decorated with painted bark which perpetuate the memory of the

group, and with the cosmology of the Eskimo Paulosee Kunilisee, carved in a whalebone.

As religions marks the days, from birth to death, one sees Indian women paint the earth walls with symbolical figures, serpent-women (Bowa Devi) or trees with serpent roots (Jivya Sonna Mashe), which play a role of initiation to marriage. "When men leave for the school of circumcision, the women of the N'debele tribe in southern Africa replaster their houses, rebuild the entrance and paint the walls". Such a dwelling was reproduced, decorated with geometrical patterns and stylised motifs by Esther Mahangu. Kane Kwei from Ghana makes coffins shaped like lions, cars or boats. Efimbelo from Madagascar carves funeral poles topped with an emblematic figure: a ploughman, a coach, motorcyclist, etc. Jimmy Wuhlu, from Australia, makes hollow funeral posts on which fish represent the souls of the dead.

We said that many of these artists were magicians and witch-doctors. The works of the Brazilian Mestre Didi, who is both an artist and a priest, represent the ritual objects of his religion, made from palmleaf veins, leather, raffia and shells. On a platform covered in earth, the Haitian Wesner Philidor has drawn magic symbols in white and ocre powder, directed by a central tree coloured red, around which lies the painting of a green snake. These are the "veves", symbols of the voodoo gods. Members of the Yuendumu Aborigine Community came to reproduce a ritual painting on sand in honour of their ancestors. Cyprien Tokoudagba, from Benin, has rebuilt a voodoo temple with expressive sculptures.

Since Heavenly God appeared to him, Frederic Bruly Bouabre, from the Ivory Coast, has been covering hundreds of postcard-size pieces of cardboard with ball-point drawings coloured with crayons and encircled by a cap-

tion. On them, he reproduces portraits of famous men as well as myths, objects from everyday life and his visions, or his patient observation of signs: marks on a banana or the "atomization of clouds". He has drawn a snail, surrounded by the caption: "Around 1977, I discovered that no snail resembled another one in its shell adornment". Why invest? It is enough to see.

There are countless works of religious inspiration (such as

Nepalese tankas and Tibetan vegetable powder mandalas). Exhibitors who, without being traditional, do not reveal some religious quest or sensitivity, are scarce. Bringing together these artists from contrasting origins, this exhibition has made it possible to bring joyous acknowledgment and respect to these magicians who are the mysterious bearers of the obscure but deep hopes of the world. — French features

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As climate erodes cities

Gulf Arab countries face huge maintenance, reconstruction costs

BAHRAIN (R) — The climate in the Gulf, one of the harshest in the world, is eating away the buildings at the heart of its cities.

Crumbling concrete is not good news for the region's oil-exporting states, already in deficit due to crumbling oil prices in the 1980s.

Just when most Gulf Arab states thought their basic economic infrastructure was complete, they now face the seemingly never-ending expense of multi-billion dollar maintenance and reconstruction programmes.

"Operations and maintenance are going to be a big budget burden of the 1990s," said a Gulf-based senior bank economist.

The problem arises from a chemical reaction between the hot, humid climate and the sand and steel ingredients used to make concrete, construction industry experts say.

Governments are worried. "I wonder whether the lessons from our experiences over the past 15 years are not always being given the consideration they deserve," Bahrain's Works, Power, and Water Minister Majid Al Jishi told a conference.

Unless the lessons were learnt, he said, government and private money would continue to be wasted.

The president of Bahrain's Society of Engineers, Hisham Al Shebab, told the Bahrain conference that quick solutions to the problems of deteriorating concrete did not look promising.

British expert Adam Neville said reinforced concrete was corroded in the Gulf three to four times faster than in Britain.

Summer temperatures of 38 to 50 degrees Centigrade (100 to 122 Fahrenheit), coupled with humidity often well over 90 per cent, accelerate the corrosion in sand-based concrete.

These corrosive salts oxidise a building's reinforcing steel rod skeletons and the whole edifice begins to crack and crumble.

The problem is compounded because knowledge of the long-term corrosive effects was not sufficiently advanced when many buildings were constructed during the building boom generated by high oil prices in the 1970s.

For example, a lot of sand for concrete was taken from the Gulf and the sea salts, full of corrosive chlorides, were not properly washed out, the experts said.

"Since then, better aggregates, purer water has been used, and there is better supervision. Con-

crete is water-proofed better," said one construction industry manager.

But nothing will stop the climate completely. "The climate is very, very aggressive. You are still going to get problems in 20 years. You will never get the 50 years you can expect in Europe," said one expert with a local construction company.

Some older structures have proved too costly to repair. For example, two wings of Bahrain's Gulf Hotel, built in 1969, have been demolished. A hotel spokesman said they were deteriorating too rapidly due to high salt content.

Without further technological

advances, Gulf Arab states face the costs, including depreciation and insurance, of renewing infrastructure near the coast about once every two decades, economists said.

Inland, the weather is kinder to man-made structures but the desert sands, which buried a dozen ancient civilisations, have little respect for 20th century constructions.

Sand plus wind acts as a natural abrasive on buildings while the desert dunes, creeping inexorably forward at a rate of a few feet a year, must be constantly held back. Sand is not as damaging as atmospheric corrosion, but it adds to costs.

Ceausescu criticises party, food distribution

VIENNA, Austria (AP) — Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu has levelled unusual criticism at his ruling Communist Party and called for a programme to modernise the food industry and improve consumer distribution, the state-run Agerpres news agency said Saturday.

In recent weeks, Ceausescu has shown an increasing interest in improving the supply of food, in what observers speculate could be an attempt to appease the population and avert the grassroots reform demands sweeping the rest of Eastern Europe.

Ceausescu made his remarks at the first meeting of the policy-setting Politburo since a Communist Party congress last week that unanimously re-elected him party leader. At that congress, he criticised the party's economic shortcomings, including factories operating at a loss and failures to meet export quotas.

At the Politburo meeting, Ceausescu assumed the mandate of organising an international conference of communist parties.

Ceausescu had proposed such a conference during the party congress, leading to speculation the hard-line leader could be seeking outside support in the face of the reform movements sanctioned by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

Ceausescu said a "special pro-

gramme was required to modernise the food and light industries, better organise the shopping network and to meet the consumer demands," Agerpres reported, adding that Ceausescu said the shortages would be remedied within two years.

He said it was "essential to ... strengthen the sense of responsibility, order and discipline for the firm application of the laws and the party decisions," Agerpres reported.

Ceausescu called on the party leadership to improve communication with local party leaders and not make any decision "that has not been discussed before with the whole party."

Romania is a one-party state with no parliamentary opposition and all key government posts are held by communists.

The Politburo also criticised economic shortcomings, including factories operating at a loss and failures to meet export quotas.

At the Politburo meeting, Ceausescu assumed the mandate of organising an international conference of communist parties.

Plans for tallest building in Chicago move ahead

CHICAGO (AP) — Plans are moving forward for an office building that would replace the Sears Tower as the world's tallest, but a few developers said it remains to be seen whether excitement in the business community will rise as high.

The Chicago Planning Commission enthusiastically and unanimously approved plans for the sleek, 1,950-foot (595-metre) rocket-shaped tower that would climb 125 stories in the loop business district.

Its site would be only two blocks from the 110-story Sears Tower, the world's tallest building since 1974. Sears Tower is 1,454 feet (443 metres) to its roof, 1,707 feet (520 metres) to the tip of its antenna.

"We Chicagoans have three things: We have a lot of water, a lot of corn and tall buildings, and we're not about to give up any of those," said J. Paul Beitler, who proposes to build the tower in partnership with fellow developer Lee Mignin.

But skeptics in the commercial real estate industry have expressed

ed doubts the tower will ever be built.

They contend there is already a glut of downtown Chicago office space, which will make it difficult for the developers to find a sufficient number of small-to-mid-size tenants for the thin building. The building would have only 1.5 million square feet (139,000 square metres) of floor space, about a third of the Sears Tower's 4.2 million square feet (390,000 square metres).

"I think there's generally public excitement about the idea whenever there's anything mammoth, but it also has to make sense to the financial community," said Anthony Manno, a managing director at Lasalle Partners Inc., a Chicago development firm.

Beitler dismisses the skeptics and says the Tower, which could be completed by 1993, would further the city's reputation as a world leader in architecture.

Cesar Pelli, the Connecticut architect hired to design the proposed Mignin-Beitler Tower, said it would be "as pure an image of a skyscraper as one can make."

'Can paradise be found in capitalist nations?'

BEIJING (AP) — China's Communist Party issued a resounding rejection of private ownership Saturday, saying public ownership has become "an irreversible trend."

In an endorsement of orthodox Marxist ideology, the party newspaper People's Daily (Renmin Ribao) lambasted the capitalist principle of private ownership.

"Can 'paradise' be found in capitalist countries? Absolutely not," the paper stressed in a lengthy commentary.

"Political regimes that are based on privatised economies breed all forms of corruption," the People's Daily said. "The innate character of the bourgeois dictatorship of capitalist private ownership is a dictatorship of the rich minority over a poor majority."

In 1948 Karl Marx summarised the theory of communism in a

single phrase, "eradicating private ownership," the People's Daily said.

For half a century, many countries under the leadership of communist parties have established the great struggle of public ownership to wipe out privatisation, and this has become an irreversible historical trend," it said.

China's Communist Party stepped up its calls to adhere to strict Marxist doctrine and reject "bourgeois liberalism," or Western ideas, following the short-lived pro-democracy movement this spring.

The student-led movement sought political reforms but widened to call for increased freedoms including better education, a less controlled economy and higher wages.

After the movement was violently crushed by the Chinese

army, leaving hundreds dead, top leaders orchestrated a return to doctrinaire slogans, ordering the mass media to follow the Communist Party line and selectively report positive news.

Government leaders also have rejected political pluralism and have continued to crack down on political dissent.

The People's Daily noted that advocates of privately owned land contend that China's system of public ownership has "restrained productive forces, (causing) alarming waste, plunging efficiency and suppression of individual talent, and brought about dictatorship at the political level which became the warm bed of corruption and the cradle of a centralised autocracy."

Such advocates claim that with public ownership "China cannot be wealthy and strong, and there can be no liberty and democracy

in the country," the paper said. "This was to incite the people to ring early the bell of privatisation."

In fact, China has encouraged de facto private ownership of farmland and urban housing. One of the first steps of the economic reforms begun a decade ago was to grant farmers long-term leases to till crops on which they could make a profit. Local governments have experimented with permitting families to purchase their own apartments, although the practice is not widespread.

But "socialist public ownership does not fetter the productive forces, it liberates them," the People's Daily said.

"Public ownership guarantees the motive force for the development of the socialist society," it said. "Capitalist privatisation determines that the capitalist gets

the bigger interest and thus the workers become the oppressed and exploited."

The paper said those who support private ownership claim that Chinese yearn to leave the country for overseas, even agreeing to be "third-rate citizens of other nations."

"This is pure rumour," the People's Daily said. "Most Chinese people studying or working abroad love their homeland."

Thousands of Chinese overseas, however, do seek ways to remain abroad rather than return to China where they face low-paying jobs which they may not be able to choose and drab living conditions.

U.S. diplomats in Beijing say that more than 90 per cent of Chinese who go to study in the United States do not come back.

U.S., Japan and W. Germany sharpen exports

WASHINGTON (AP) — The world's major trading nations — the United States, Japan and West Germany — showed big increases in the volume of their exports during the first half of this year compared with 1988, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported Sunday.

West Germany's increase was 12 per cent, the United States' 9.6 per cent and Japan's 6.4 per cent.

U.S. figures showed a continued rise in the third quarter of the year.

For the first six months of 1989 the United States still had a deficit in its trade. U.S. imports were \$58.8 billion greater than exports, compared with \$67.1 billion the year before.

Japan's surplus of exports over imports increased massively to \$43.9 billion from \$33.7 billion — nearly one-third — and West Germany's to \$37.2 billion from

\$34.9 billion. Increased deficits were reported for Britain, \$23.3 billion instead of \$21.1 billion; Italy \$10.3 billion, up from \$6.8 billion; and France, \$8.4 billion up from \$5.8 billion.

Total trade of 22 industrial countries rose to \$2,164.7 trillion from \$2,097.7 trillion for the six months.

Production of industry was also on the rise: 5.3 per cent in Japan in the summer quarter, 4.7 per cent for West Germany and 2.7 per cent for the United States. Figures for other major West European countries were not available.

In each case, the fund compared rates with the similar period in the preceding year. This makes some differences with other statistics that compare with the immediately preceding period, for example: The first six

months of 1989 and the last six months of 1988.

The fund reported a drop of inflation among industrial countries in the summer quarter of the year — July to September. Prices paid by their consumers rose at an annual 4.5 per cent rate against 4.8 per cent in the spring quarter.

Third World countries, slower in their reporting, showed a slight

drop in the annual rate for the April to June quarter — 62.7 per cent instead of 63.8 per cent. These figures vary widely from country to country: Brazil's annual rate was 846.5 per cent, while Mexico's 18.4 per cent, while more prosperous countries in Asia had much lower rates, such as South Korea's 5.7 per cent.

The fund also noted a strengthening of the U.S. dollar in October. Compared with other major currencies, it was worth 4.42 per cent more than in October 1988. In the same period, the Japanese yen dropped by 9.95 per cent, the British pound by 7.96 per cent and the Swiss franc by 4.26 per cent.

The Deutschmark and French franc showed small increases.

Pilots shake Aeroflot

MOSCOW (R) — State airline Aeroflot, whose poor service has made it the butt of jokes by Soviet air passengers, will soon face competition from a consortium set up by its own pilots, Izvestia has said.

The government newspaper said the new airline, named ASDA (Association of Extra Long Haul Routes), had received preliminary approval from a parliamentary commission and has until next January to present final proposals.

ASDA will fly leased Boeing 747s. Some of its staff will be air force pilots made redundant by cuts in the armed forces.

The new airline could be in business as early as 1991, operat-

ing long-haul routes in the Soviet Union and abroad.

"Will ASDA become the second Aeroflot?" the newspaper asked. "It is too early to talk about that for now. But ASDA is going to take on business that Aeroflot cannot cope with at the moment."

"The setting up of ASDA means the end of two monopolies — Aeroflot and the ministry of aviation industry. It will be good for passengers and a lesson for the future — monopoly in any industry harms the interests of consumers," it noted.

Aeroflot, the world's largest airline in terms of kilometres flown, has a bad reputation among Soviet passengers who

have no choice of carrier on domestic flights and are virtually obliged to use it when travelling abroad.

Prices of flights are low by European and U.S. standards — so low that it is worthwhile for farmers from the southern republics to fly for the day to Moscow to sell fruit and vegetables from their private plots.

A single ticket from Moscow to Vladivostok, 7,000 kilometres to the southeast, is one of the most expensive domestic flights, costing 134 roubles (\$220).

With planes invariably full, Soviet passengers complain that obtaining a seat on popular routes requires hours or even days of queuing.

Yemens, oil firms hit rough road

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — South Yemen's Energy and Minerals Minister Saleh Al Bakr Ibn Hussain, says a deal with a foreign consortium for oil exploration in a border area shared with North Yemen might collapse, the Asharq Al Awsat daily said Sunday.

It quoted him as saying in an interview that the consortium of U.S., Soviet, French and Kuwaiti firms has been given until Wednesday to improve their terms to the joint Yemeni Company for Investments in Oil and Mineral Resources.

"If no agreement is reached with the five companies on December 6, then the Yemeni company will open the door for other companies that had submitted offers for exploration," he said.

The minister said the snag developed after the consortium insisted on a 30 per cent production-sharing agreement and a five-year exploration lease which were unacceptable to the Yemeni company.

But he did not say it had any alternative offers.

The foreign companies in the consortium are Hunt Oil Co., Exxon Corp. of the United States, the Soviet Union's Machinexport and Zarubezhneft, France's Total-Compagnie Francaise Des Petroles and the state-run Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Co.

He said the Yemeni company advised the consortium representatives of its stand at a meeting in Sanaa, North Yemen capital, last month.

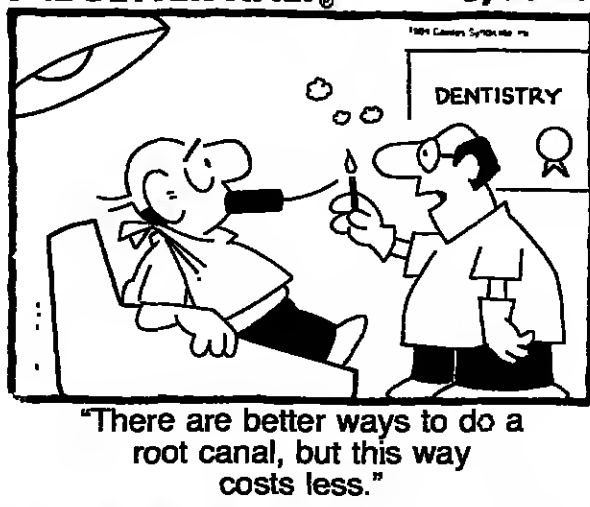
The consortium officials requested that they consult with their head offices before giving response Wednesday.

Hussainoun did not specify where Wednesday's meeting would be held.

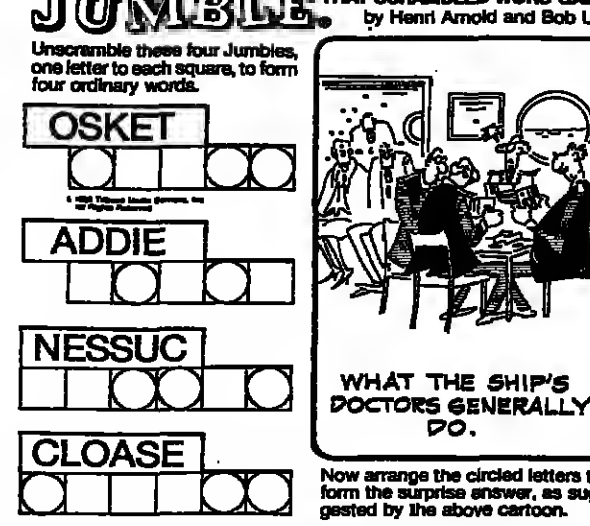
He and his North Yemen counterpart, Ahmed Al Mahi, selected the consortium from long list of bidders in September and asked the Yemeni company to follow up negotiations to finalise a contract.

The concession covers an 8 square-mile (2,200-square kilometre) area straddling the border of the two Yemens.

THE BETTER HALF By Harris



JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee



AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sunday December 3, 1989		Central Bank official rates		
	Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	642.0	648.0	French franc	105.1
Pound Sterling	1002.8	1012.8	Japanese yen (for 100)	447.7
Deutschemark	358.9	362.5	Dutch guilder	318.4
Swiss franc	400.7	407.1	Swedish crown	103.8
			Italian lira (for 100)	48.7
			Belgian franc (for 10)	171.7



Handwritten signature: J. J. J. J. J.

De Klerk says his reform recognised by neighbours

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — President F.W. de Klerk has returned from the Ivory Coast, where he said his country's reforms were being recognised by its black African neighbours and other foreign governments.

South Africa and the Ivory Coast do not have formal diplomatic relations. The Ivory Coast has made freeing African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela a condition to establishing diplomatic relations. "As and when it is possible, he (Mandela) will be released. But I am not prepared to speculate on when," de Klerk told a news conference in Yaounde, Cameroon, after a day of talks with Ivorian President Felix Houphouët-Boigny.

De Klerk, who took office in August, has mapped out a course of cautious reform. He recently ordered the opening of beaches and other public facilities to all races, but has given no indication he wants to dismantle South Africa's group areas act, which segregates residential areas, and the population registration act, which officially classifies all South Africans by race.

De Klerk has said he wants to extend political rights to blacks, but opposes majority rule.

Houphouët-Boigny, Africa's longest-serving leader, has advocated talks with South Africa to dismantle the country's apartheid system of racial segregation. But he opposes sanctions.

Policeman held
Meanwhile, a second ex-police man has been detained in connection with the assassination of two white political activists in South Africa and Namibia, police said Sunday.

Police declined to name the man but state-radio said he was Callie Botha, a former police sergeant who resigned from the force last year.

Last week, police said a former drug squad officer, Ferdie Barnard, was being held in connection with the murder of the activist.



F.W. de Klerk

ists, South African university lecturer David Webster and Namibian lawyer Anton Lubowski.

The arrests have given impetus to widespread published reports charging that officially-sanctioned death squads have been responsible for the elimination of scores of opponents of the Pretoria government.

Webster, prominent in the South African anti-apartheid movement, was gunned down outside his home last May. Lubowski, the senior white official in the South West Africa People's Organisation in Namibia, was killed in Windhoek, the Namibian capital, in September.

Rallies broken up

Police used dogs, whips and batons to break up protest rallies in Durban and Cape Town Saturday, witnesses said, while a march to a police station in the rural Orange Free State was allowed. Police used whips and dogs to break up an attempted march by thousands of blacks against inadequate housing and rent increases in Durban, said journalists, adding that children were trampled as the crowd fled in all directions. Shoppers and people posting Christmas mail were dragged away to police vehicles.

Police said they used rubber batons to disperse thousands of

people who marched in the streets in defiance of a police order to disperse.

The protesters had divided into groups in an attempt to avoid police. But lines of riot squad officers blocked them near the post office.

In the mixed-race township of Athlone, near Cape Town, police said they arrested about 30 people, including officials of sports organisations, when scores of protesters surrounded a cricket field where a match was in progress and demanded to enter. Police confiscated placards with slogans condemning a planned English cricket tour of South Africa. Protest leaders said more than 50 were arrested.

C.R. Clarke, general secretary of the South African Council of Sport, said two protesters were hit with batons.

In the Orange Free State mining centre of Welkom, several thousand people marched to the local police station and presented a letter demanding the release of political prisoners, the lifting of the national state of emergency, the abolishment of the death penalty and the repeal of all apartheid laws.

The march had been approved by a magistrate. But Frans Balem, a regional organiser for the National Union of Mineworkers, said police put barbed wire up along the road to the station, preventing more people from joining the procession. The independent South African Press Association said there were 30,000 marchers.

In Ciskei, a nominally independent black homeland bordering the Indian Ocean, two anti-apartheid activists were freed Saturday after spending two years in prison. Several hundred people waited outside the prison, but security police drove the prisoners past them to a rural village. After a church service, the prisoners were taken by supporters to the town of Alice, where about 2,000 people gathered to welcome them.

Opposition gains in Taiwan

TAIPEI (AP) — Election results Sunday showed a feisty opposition party making strong gains in the island's first multi-party elections, handing the ruling Nationalist Party an embarrassing defeat in the hometown of Taiwan's president.

The opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) claimed "a great victory" in the election, the first national vote since the ruling Nationalist Party lifted martial law in 1987.

With nearly all of the districts reporting, the Nationalists were garnering 55 per cent of the popular vote while the opposition won about 35 per cent. The rest went to independents.

"This is a setback for the Nationalists," said Ting Tm-Yu, a professor of sociology. "They should have won 70 per cent of the vote."

In 1986 elections, the Nationalists won 86 per cent of the vote and opposition candidates, running as independents, won 23 per cent. The opposition was not allowed to organise parties until after martial law was lifted in

1987. The opposition made gains in both the national legislature and heavily contested local races. An opposition faction that ran on a campaign platform that was technically illegal also polled well.

Ballot-rigging and noisy protests marred the election. Thousands of angry opposition supporters surrounded government office buildings in several cities, calling for recounts or demanding results. But fears of widespread violence abated early Sunday morning as reports of the opposition's success circulated.

In a slap in the face to the ruling Nationalist Party, opposition candidate Yon Ching, a 47-year-old legislator, won the post of county executive in Taipei county. President Lee Teng-Hui's hometown. The president is a symbol of Nationalist power.

Tens of thousands of revellers celebrated Yon's victory, setting off fireworks and dancing in the streets near Yon's campaign headquarters.

The Nationalists used millions of dollars in an attempt to win the

post, representing the most populated country on the island.

The Nationalists cannot lose power in the election. The 256-seat legislature and the electoral college are dominated by 162 elderly nationalists elected on the Chinese mainland in the late 1940s and frozen in office to support the party's claim to be the legitimate government of all China.

Still, the vote is of tremendous importance to this highly industrialised island of 20 million that is considered an economic miracle in Asia. It is the first nationwide election since 38 years of martial law ended in 1987 and the first with a legal, organised opposition. It is also the first to witness relatively open debate on taboo subjects such as Taiwan independence and official corruption.

In all, 722 candidates ran in the legislative, mayoral and county executive races. In the legislature, the opposition won 21 seats; it previously held 12. The Nationalists won 72 seats.

Baku to suspend Moscow ruling on Karabakh

MOSCOW (R) — The President of Azerbaijan has said his republic will suspend part of a Kremlin ruling altering the status of the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, an Azerbaijani journalist said Sunday.

Independent journalist Nazim Ragimov said President Elmira Kharlova announced on local television Saturday that the republic's sovereignty was infringed by the ruling, which returned the territory to Azerbaijani control.

Kharlova's announcement put Soviet authorities on a collision course with both Azerbaijan and Armenia, which both claim the territory in the Soviet Transcaucasus region.

The Armenian parliament Friday denounced the ruling and voted to unite its republic with Nagorno-Karabakh.

More than 120 people have died in some two years of conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The region, populated mainly by Armenians, has been run by from Moscow last January.

Ragimov told Reuters by telephone from the Azerbaijan capital Baku that Kharlova announced the impending suspension during a television debate.

"She said parts of the ruling infringed Azerbaijan's sovereignty and the republic's Supreme Soviet (parliament) agreed that some of its provisions should be suspended," he said.

Ragimov said a crowd of up to half a million had massed in Baku's central square earlier Saturday to denounce the changes to the territory's status, approved last week by the Soviet parliament in Moscow.

Azerbaijanis object to the Moscow resolution because it gives central authorities the right to oversee troop deployments in Nagorno-Karabakh until the situation there is "normalised."

Earlier this year, Azerbaijan's parliament voted to give itself the right to veto any Moscow legislation which it felt violated the republic's sovereignty. Last month the Kremlin ordered Azerbaijan to drop the law.

Azerbaijan's Popular Front mass movement reimposed a total blockade on rail traffic in and out of Armenia last week to force its neighbour to give up its claims to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Ragimov said the front's leaders, appearing on the same television programme as Kharlova, told her they would lift the blockade for a week.

Ishaq Khan assails Bhutto government

ISLAMABAD (AP) — President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has told a joint session of parliament that one year after Pakistan's return to democracy, high expectations have sunk into despair.

He blamed most of it on the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

In a toughly worded address to Pakistan's senate and national assembly, Ishaq said, "a year of trading abuses and inaction is starting to frustrate huddling hopes."

Ishaq, 77, criticised Bhutto's left-leaning government and its centre-right political opposition for squandering opportunities to strengthen Pakistan's fragile democracy, which followed 11 years of military rule.

Ishaq was closely aligned with his predecessor, military president Mohammad Zia Ul Haq.

"Instead of understanding and accommodation there has been confrontation at all levels and political horse-trading," he said.

"A year ago there was a festive look. Faces were flushed with fresh resolve and new hope. But now, I'm honestly reflecting the feelings of millions of our people. They are in the grip of agony and concern," Ishaq said in Urdu.

Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won the largest bloc of votes in November 1988 in the first free elections in more than a decade. But an alliance of opposi-

tion parties won control of powerful Punjab province.

Ishaq said bitter squabbling between the two has given rise to the admonishment that "the country's legislators do everything but legislate."

He warned that democracy in developing nations had to be more than an intellectual exercise. He said charges of corruption, which have plagued Bhutto's government, and only incremental improvements in the quality of life, would weaken "the common man's faith in democracy."

In an interview after the president's speech Ammar Piracha, a PPP lawmaker, said:

"We have to look at what went wrong ... and people may be upset, but people have not lost faith in the democratic process."

She said Ishaq "has to rise above past affiliations and play a role in building (relations) between the federal and provincial governments."

The majority of the Punjab lawmakers are, like Ishaq, Zia loyalists. Zia, who overthrew Bhutto's father in a 1977 coup and had him hanged two years later, died in an August 1988 plane crash, clearing the way for elections.

Ishaq complained that Bhutto's government has done little to carry on an Islamisation programme launched by Zia.



Ghulam Ishaq Khan

Before his death, Zia was trying to introduce an Islamic legal system linking state and religion.

On the positive side, the president said the Bhutto government's an economic renewal programme was making some progress, particularly in controlling inflation.

He said Pakistan's return to democracy had improved its international standing and brought economic benefits.

Pakistan's shining image abroad is largely credited to Bhutto, although her critics charge domestic concerns have been sacrificed for international attention.

Soviet Georgians besiege minority group's capital

MOSCOW (AP) — The capital of an autonomous minority region in the southern Soviet Republic of Georgia was reported under virtual blockade Saturday by armed Georgian activists holding hostages in nearby villages.

Irina Gaguyeva, an official of the regional committee of the Communist Youth Organisation, said Tskhinvali, the capital of the South Ossetian autonomous region of Georgia, was virtually cut off by Georgian militants occupying the nearby villages of Eklvi, Ercovi and Anevi.

She said 38 people had been injured in ethnic violence between Georgians and Ossetians, which began Nov. 23. Gaguyeva added that militants were reportedly holding some 150 people captive in the three villages. Tskhinvali has about 40,000 inhabitants.

"We feel like hostages in our city, separated from the rest of the world," Gaguyeva said, speaking by telephone from Tskhinvali, about 100 kilometres northwest of Georgia's capital, Tbilisi. She said supplies of food were starting to run short.

It was not immediately possible to contact authorities in the Caucasus republic for comment, but ethnic violence was reported in the Ossetian region earlier this

week. Moscow-based telephone operators said lines with Georgia were down Saturday night.

The Ossetians are one of many small ethnic groups populating Georgia which has been one of the flashpoints of Soviet ethnic violence this year. The clashes between Georgians and members of another ethnic minority, the Abkhazians, have been especially brutal, but violence has touched the Ossetians and the Meskhetian region of Georgia as well.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has said his reform drive's most urgent task is settling the often centuries old quarrels among the more than 100 ethnic groups that people the Soviet Union.

An editor at the state-run Georgian news agency Gruzin-form reported Monday that clashes between Georgians and Ossetians had left eight people injured.

Gaguyeva said the violence broke out when 400 busloads of Georgian militants were not allowed to demonstrate in Tskhinvali.

The Georgians are demanding Ossetians submit to Georgian political control or move from the republic. Some Ossetians have called for their homeland to be made an "autonomous republic," which would give them more con-

trol over local affairs than its present status and make them less dependent on decisions taken in Tbilisi.

Barred by police and Ossetian activists from demonstrating in Tskhinvali, the Georgians took some 200 hostages and occupied nearby villages whose population is mostly Georgian, Gaguyeva said.

She said some 50 hostages were released two days ago, and claimed to have been tortured and thrown naked into icy mountain streams. The other captives are still being held, she said.

According to the Communist youth official, a deputy Soviet interior minister was now in Tskhinvali. She said inhabitants were demanding the proclamation of a state of emergency so Interior Ministry troops could be called in to assault the villages and free the captive Ossetians.

Gaguyeva claimed that the republic's police, largely composed of Georgians, sympathised with the militants and was doing nothing to break the blockade.

In April, 19 people were killed when shovelling Soviet troops were called in to break up a pro-independence demonstration by Georgian activists in Tbilisi. A 20th person, a man, was later shot dead for violating a curfew imposed in the city.

Sikh militant seeks peace

AMRITSAR, India (Agencies) — A Sikh militant newly-elected to parliament and just freed from jail and from charges he plotted the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, said Sunday he wanted to bring peace to Punjab.

"We will try and bring peace and tranquillity back to Punjab," former senior policeman Simranjit Singh Mann said.

Mann, one of nine hardliners voted into parliament last week, was speaking shortly after he was freed from jail, the charges against him dropped, and flown to Amritsar, the Sikh holy city.

He said he had no immediate ideas of how peace would be returned to Punjab, where a bloody Sikh separatist campaign has cost more than 1,900 lives this year.

"I have been totally out of touch during five years in jail. I don't know what is going on. Please give me some time," he said in an interview.

Mann said the new government replacing that of Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son, would have to end what he called its undercover activities stirring trouble if peace were to be established.

He said he had heard from other Sikh leaders in the hours since his release of government agents robbing, stealing, extorting and even killing in the guise of militants.

"The government must expose these acts," said Mann, who was mobbed by supporters when he went to the Golden Temple, Sikhism's holiest shrine.

It was Indira Gandhi's 1984 order to the army to root out separatists using the temple as a headquarters that led to her assassination by Sikh bodyguards.

More than 1,000 people were killed when the army went into the temple in July, 1984. Two Sikh bodyguards, one of whom was killed, assassinated her four months later.

The government also freed other top Sikh leaders from jails. United News of India said Mann was released after the government withdrew cases against him.

Other leaders released were Gurcharan Singh Tohra, chief of the Sikh temple management committee, and Prakash Singh Badal, a former chief minister of Punjab.

Mann was greeted at Amritsar by 10,000 Sikhs at the airport. The order to release Mann and others was one of the last acts by Rajiv Gandhi, before he submitted his resignation Wednesday.

Gandhi's Congress Party failed to win a majority in last month's national elections.

The formal order to release Mann was issued by Prime Minister Vashwanath Pratap Singh.

The shots that killed Indira Gandhi on Oct. 31, 1984, were fired by two of her Sikh bodyguards. One of them was shot to death on the spot by other bodyguards.

The surviving gunman and a Sikh government clerk convicted in the plot were hanged in January.

The government said the assassination was masterminded by Sikh extremists. Mann was charged with conspiracy when the assassination case was reopened last April.

Mann, 44, was elected from the Taran Taran constituency in Punjab, campaigning from a jail more than 1,300 kilometres away in Bihar state.

COLUMN

Santa Claus loses 'reindeer'

AFTON, New York (AP) — A would-be Santa Claus says he lost one of his "reindeer" to a hunter on the first day of deer season. One of the dozen European fallow deer at Santa's cottage escaped from its pen on Thanksgiving, said owner Fred Kreig. A hunter thought the deer was wild and shot it, said Kreig, who gives tours and holds holiday events at the farm for needy children. The hunter realised his mistake and offered to pay for the deer, valued at \$800. "I told him the idea of his calling to apologise was plenty," said Kreig, who invited the hunter to bring his family to Santa's cottage whenever he wants.

'Frozen' robber surrenders

HELSINKI, Finland (AP) — A 38-year-old British bank robber surrendered after his getaway car froze to a standstill, newspapers have reported. The man, who was not identified, confessed to three bank robberies in Finland since August and two in Sweden, the media reported. Police found the abandoned British-registered car on the road outside Helsinki, where temperatures have fallen to far below freezing. The man reportedly told police after the breakdown that it was futile for him to remain a fugitive. Photographs of the robber in action were taken by surveillance cameras in Helsinki banks. Witnesses reported seeing a white car with the steering wheel on the right side, bringing the vehicle to the attention of the police. The robber has criminal record in Britain, the reports said.

Actors' guild honours Lemmon

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Actor Jack Lemmon, winner of two Academy awards, was named the recipient of the Screen Actors Guild's highest honour, its annual Achievement Award. Lemmon, 64, will receive the award at the guild's yearly membership meeting Dec. 10, the guild said. The annual award, the only national honour bestowed by the union, goes to a guild member for outstanding career achievement and contributions to charitable and humanitarian causes. Other recipients include Bob Hope, Stan Laurel, Barbara Stanwyck, James Stewart, Edward G. Robinson, Gregory Peck, Charlton Heston, Frank Sinatra, James Cagney, Gene Kelly and Paul Newman. Lemmon, whose latest film is "Dad," won Academy awards for supporting actor in "Mister Roberts" in 1955 and lead actor in "Save the Tiger" in 1973.

Skating jitters for O'Shea

NEW YORK (AP) — When actor Milo O'Shea was recruited for the Broadway musical "Meet Me in St. Louis," he was excited about returning to the stage. But that was before he knew it contained a scene requiring ice skating. "In Ireland, my country, they do not have ice skating. The winters are too mild," O'Shea said in a television interview. O'Shea said he figured when the show's producers asked if he could skate, they meant roller skate. He was wrong. "So I went along and they presented me with ice skates, and I was horrified," O'Shea recalled. "I said I had never ice skated. They said, 'Don't worry. We got a very good skater who'll show you how.'"

Global weather

(major world cities)

	MIN.	MAX.	Weather
AMSTERDAM	04	25	04
ATHENS	05	41	05
BAHRAIN	21	29	84
BANGKOK	17	28	82
Buenos Aires	02	23	51
Cairo	10	19	65
CHICAGO	X	X	X
COPENHAGEN	08	28	54
FRANKFURT	04	25	05
GENEVA	01	24	01
HONG KONG	18	21	72
ISTANBUL	02	26	02
JAKARTA	22	34	88
LOS ANGELES	X	X	X
MADRID	10	19	59
MEXICO	22	34	88
MONTREAL	09	22	12
MOSCOW	X	X	X
NEW DELHI	07	45	74
NEW YORK	X	X	X
PARIS	01	20	05
ROME	01	20	05
SEATTLE	21	28	70
TOKYO	05	19	65
VIENNA	X	X	X

X - indicates missing information.

Thai wages anti-AIDS battle amid massive sex industry

By Denis D. Gray
The Associated Press

BANGKOK — Handing out condoms to bare-bottomed go-go dancers and charming donations out of corporation executives, Mechai Viravaidya says he is waging war against the toughest enemy Thailand has faced — AIDS.

The 48-year-old development expert, whose innovative, internationally lauded campaign helped stop Thailand's population explosion, says he has "blown the lid" off a dangerous silence that hung over the killer disease.

Until recent months, Thai officialdom played down AIDS for fear bad publicity would hurt the country's highest income earner — foreign tourism.

The turnaround has been dramatic, Mechai says he hopes information about AIDS, from television spots, skits by prostitutes and frank debates by academics, is spreading faster than the disease.

Combining the showmanship

and marketing techniques that characterised his birth control drive, Mechai says he has launched a unique programme to involve multinationals and Thai businesses.

Mechai also passes out condoms at tea parties, brothels, funerals, weddings and high-level government meetings, along with brochures, cassettes and some gaily photographs of AIDS victims. Witty and disarming, popular and well-connected, Mechai gets away with almost anything.

"If we move effectively in the next three years, Thailand has a chance of containing AIDS," Mechai said in an interview. Failure, he said, could be disastrous.

In recent months, military Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan has openly voiced support for the AIDS war. Government officials have taken part in media debates on the subject and the Health Ministry has begun its own information campaign.

Frightening statistics
What most frightens Mechai

and other knowledgeable Thais is the country's sex industry, with prostitutes said to number in the hundreds of thousands. Massage parlours, bars, brothels, "love hotels," escort agencies and private clubs are part of this multi-million-dollar AIDS powderkeg.

"The Thai male propensity to consume sex is immense," says Mechai. Thailand also attracts jet-loads of male tourists from all over the world.

About 12,800 out of nearly two million Thais tested have been exposed to the AIDS virus while about 30 have died from the disease.

Mechai and others, however, believe that AIDS testing has been far from comprehensive, and that the numbers infected are far greater. Mechai and government officials also agree that AIDS is spreading rapidly.

Mechai, who has served as a deputy minister and government spokesman, said the bureaucracy's effectiveness in fighting AIDS could at best be "mediocre," so earlier this year

he and his population and development association focused on two of Thailand's most powerful institutions — the military and big business.

Support

He cites Aug. 14 as a milestone. That's the day army commander in chief Chavalit Yongchaiyudh publicly threw the army's support behind the anti-AIDS war. He also offered Mechai three years' worth of free anti-AIDS spots during prime time on the two army-controlled television stations.

"If your customers die of AIDS, you're going to lose business. If your workers die, you've lost a lot of investment," is one pitch Mechai uses with executives, who he says have opened their boardrooms.

Mechai plans a large campaign to educate businessmen and employees pass through his association's briefing on AIDS, and sizeable donations already are coming in. The American International Assurance Company has agreed to mail

AIDS information to more than half a million of its policy holders in Thailand, while Avon Cosmetics will have its door-to-door saleswomen dispense it along with lipstick and facial creams.

As he did when battling for birth control, Mechai tries to inject some "sanuk," the Thai sense of play and fun, into his campaign to elicit mass support. He also avoids moral judgments while arguing that an AIDS-free society, just like one with moderate population growth, makes pragmatic sense.

"I'm not criticising anybody's lifestyle, but one must protect one's life and those of others," Mechai said recently while he blitzed Patpong road, Bangkok's anything-goes nightlife strip. Games were played and T-shirts were sold and, as Mechai's name was called, a local battered by the bar girls and their foreign customers.

"Fighting AIDS is the best thing for tourism. Tourists will come if they know the country is

doing something about AIDS," is Mechai's answer to officials who fear loss of tourist dollars and yen.

Also making it virtually impossible for the AIDS problem to be swept back under the carpet is the involvement of Princess Chulabhorn, a daughter of the country's revered constitutional monarch, Bhumibol Adulyadej. Many Thais regard this as the king's own move against the disease.

But despite dramatic progress in awareness, changing sexual mores and controlling a sex industry in which politicians, police and other powerful interests are widely believed to have a large stake probably will prove difficult.

"Within the next few years, Thailand will have more than one million AIDS patients," a highly respected doctor, Pravease Was, said recently. "It is worse than any war. It will destroy every fibre of our social and economic life. We need a movement so intense that it can uproot men's